

# **The 1.0 Guidebook to LDC**

## **Linking Secondary Core Content to the Common Core State Standards**

Written by  
Marilyn Crawford, Stacy Galiatsos, Anne C. Lewis

with Teacher Profiles by KK Ottesen

Based on the work of the LDC Design Team



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### **Based on the work of the LDC Design Team**

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# THE LITERACY DESIGN COLLABORATIVE

“We can’t solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them.”

– Albert Einstein

The Literacy Design Collaborative [LDC] offers a fresh approach to incorporating literacy into middle and high school content areas. Designed to make literacy instruction the foundation of the core subjects, LDC allows teachers to build content on top of a coherent approach to literacy. This is drastically different than past, less structured notions of “adding” reading and writing when possible to the teaching of content.

LDC is a literacy strategy that evolved under Vicki Phillips’ leadership as a district and state superintendent for a number of years. It relies on both research and what she calls “the wisdom of practice.” The Common Core State Standards’ emphasis on literacy across the core subjects spurred a small group of practice experts to come together in 2009 to build out Phillips’ strategy into a new way of thinking about ensuring young people leave high school with the literacy skills they need to succeed.

The group created a literacy framework for the core secondary subject areas of ELA, social studies and science. It quickly expanded to become the Literacy Design Collaborative (LDC), a larger initiative that now involves an ever-growing set of partners, with teachers firmly leading the development. The project is supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Partners use the LDC framework as a common chassis to create LDC tasks, modules, and courses designed to teach students to meet common core literacy standards while also learning to meet content demands at high levels of performance. They are trying out the LDC strategy, sharing insights about results, proposing ways to design the LDC tools, and moving LDC to wider use. At the same time, other LDC partners are building a set of LDC supports to help teachers in the challenging work of teaching secondary students to achieve high-level literacy skills, consistently and systematically. Working together to harness the power of “group genius,” LDC includes classroom teachers, school and district leaders, state departments and state organizations and a wide array of service providers.

Researchers are also involved in studying this work and providing ongoing feedback. Their preliminary results are encouraging. Teachers across contents, grades and states are finding that the LDC approach builds stronger literacy skills in students and promotes ongoing conversations among teachers about what constitutes good work.

Together, the many LDC partners are working on an old problem in new, challenging and break-through ways.

## perspectives

*"These teachers are phenomenal. I get so many ideas for my classroom just sitting around talking about our modules. We steal and take from each other. I wish there was a way we could do that all the time."*

High school English teacher



LDC teacher teams, partners and developers launch the initiative at a 2010 convening in Baltimore.

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# CHAPTER 1:

## The LDC System

Nearly all high school students in the United States need substantially stronger reading and writing skills to be ready for adult success. All of us – teachers, policy officials, parents and students themselves – must take seriously the growing evidence that extraordinary steps will be necessary to change the outcomes for students.

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) provide an important starting point for addressing this challenge. They give literacy a sharp, new focus. Commonly held literacy demands across classrooms, districts and now even state lines offer incredible possibilities for collegial work. Check them out at <http://www.corestandards.org/>.

The CCSS outline literacy “anchor standards” for students to be college-and-career-ready and then work back to specify skills students will need to attain at each grade in order to finish high school at the readiness level. These skills are not pie-in-the-sky intellectual exercises. They are real literacy demands that today’s students will find in tomorrow’s campus classrooms and the workplace.

The CCSS call for dramatic classroom changes, particularly at the secondary level. They make it crystal clear that new expectations for student literacy cannot be met if they only are taught in English language arts classrooms. At rock bottom, the work to change student performance must occur in at least the core subjects of ELA, social studies and science, no matter what grade level.

What a change! Right now in most secondary classrooms, literacy is used, but it is not taught in a systematic way. Teachers often are asked to apply the strategy of “reading and writing across the

*The Common Core literacy standards for grade 6 and above are predicated on teachers of ELA, history/social studies, science, and technical subjects using their content area expertise to help students meet the particular challenges of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language in their respective fields.*

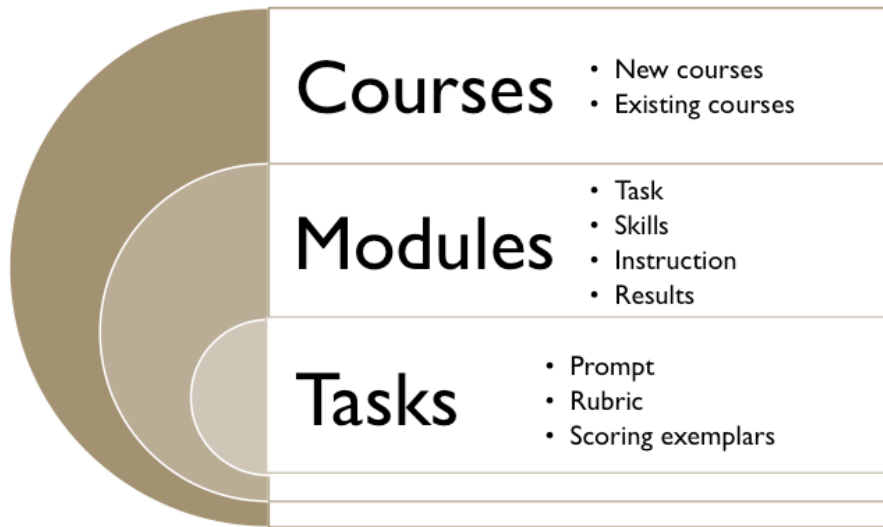
Common Core State Standards

curriculum,” but that works haphazardly at best, as teachers first lay out their course content and then fit literacy strategies on top – if at all. Teaching literacy skills that way is difficult for teachers and inadequate for students.

The LDC strategy flips this approach on its head: it lays out the literacy design first and then allows teachers to add their content on top of a solid literacy foundation. Using the LDC framework, teachers can merge CCSS literacy standards with important subject area standards – fostering coherence in teaching both. And, it acknowledges distinctive literacy work in each discipline. For example, reading, writing and thinking about science requires strategies and competencies that are different from those needed for history – which are different from the ones required for studying literature and ELA.

# The LDC System

The LDC system can be viewed through three main lenses: tasks, modules, and courses. Together, they form the LDC system.



## LDC TASKS

Each LDC task is a reading and writing prompt, asking middle or high school students to take on an important issue in science, history, ELA or another subject.

The LDC system starts with “template tasks” that have the CCSS literacy standards “hardwired” in. Teachers then put in their own content. Each template includes a “fill-in-the-blank” prompt and a scoring rubric. When teachers add their reading/writing assignments, they will have created a teaching task, which typically takes two to four weeks of classroom time. Teachers also can use the template tasks to create shorter “classroom assessment tasks” that students address in one or two sittings to be used as either pre- or post-tests.

Chapter 2 includes sample template tasks and teaching tasks. A separate document, the LDC Template Task Collection, includes the current complete prototype set of template tasks. In the future, LDC partners may build other template task banks to support a wider array of purpose-specific task sets.



## Ldc tasks

Examples of teaching tasks created from an essential question template task:

[Insert question] After reading \_\_\_\_\_ (literature or informational texts), write \_\_\_\_\_ (essay or substitute) that addresses the question and support your position with evidence from the text(s). **L2** Be sure to acknowledge competing views. **L3** Give examples from past or current events or issues to illustrate and clarify your position.

*ELA teaching task: Would you recommend A Wrinkle in Time to a middle school reader? After reading this science fiction novel, write a review that addresses the question and support your*

position with evidence from the text.

*Social studies teaching task: How did the political views of the signers of the Constitution impact the American political system? After reading Founding Brothers: The Revolutionary Generation, write a report that addresses the question and support your position with evidence from the text.*

*Science teaching task: Does genetic testing have the potential to significantly impact how we treat disease? After reading scientific sources, write a report that addresses the question and support your position with evidence from the texts. **L2** Be sure to acknowledge competing views. **L3** Give examples from past or current events or issues to illustrate and clarify your position.*

## LDC MODULES

A module provides an instructional plan for the teaching task. An LDC module takes a thoughtful approach to defining the literacy skills students must develop to succeed on the teaching task. Then it organizes instruction around a set of “mini-tasks” to help students develop those skills. Complete modules also include sample student work that meets the scoring expectations for the teaching task and other supports to help teachers and students succeed. LDC’s examples of module templates can help teachers develop their own modules. These templates give teachers flexible options for different styles of reading and writing instructional strategies. Teachers can vary the template modules they are creating based on their professional judgment about the skills students need for a particular teaching task and about appropriate instructional strategies and pacing.

The module design also allows teachers to share their modules within their school, from school to school, and from state to state. LDC will make high-quality modules from all over the country available for use and adaptation so that each teacher’s design work can help others implement the overall approach. Chapter 3 provides further detail on modules, template modules, and the steps teachers can take to use the templates for more effective literacy instruction.

## LDC COURSES

Modules can stand alone, but they are even more powerful when used as part of a larger instructional design. LDC modules can be used as building blocks to create new courses and as options inserted into existing courses. They can be linked together to create student learning experiences that cut across disciplines, courses and/or even across years. Chapter 4 offers more detailed thinking about these possibilities.

# LDC Principles

While the CCSS create strong academic goals, they also offer rich opportunities for building supports to help teachers and students meet such rigorous targets. The LDC framework creates a support solution based on a set of core principles. None of the eight core principles are surprising, but together they establish a unique approach to literacy instruction, with classic underpinnings.

## 1. LDC aligns with the Common Core State Standards.

The LDC framework's innovative literacy instruction is a way for teachers to put "legs" on the CCSS. The CCSS are "hardwired" into the template tasks to ensure students are given an assignment with clear expectations for reading and writing and are taught the literacy skills necessary to complete the assignment.



*"The new standards provide a platform for innovation, a structure that can support creative strategies for teaching core content in math and literacy."*

Vicki Phillips, Carina Wong, Phi Delta Kappan, February 2010

## 2. LDC distributes responsibility for reading and writing.

The intent of LDC is to foster the distribution of reading and writing instruction. It recognizes the primary role of ELA but is intentionally flexible so that teachers in the core subjects – many subjects actually – can add their content standards and curriculum "on top" of their literacy instruction. All teachers – not just the ELA teachers – are supported in teaching reading and writing.



*"The Standards insist that instruction in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language be a shared responsibility within the school."*

Common Core State Standards, 2010

## 3. LDC makes tasks central.

LDC student tasks set clear goals. They are "standards in action." They are the beginning point of the LDC framework, and their alignment with CCSS answers the time-old parent question: Why is my child doing this type of work?



*"The real accountability system is in the tasks that students are asked to do ... . "[T]he task predicts performance."*

Richard Elmore, City et al., 2009

## 4. LDC connects reading and writing instruction.

As the authors point out, both reading and writing are functional skills and can be combined for specific goals such as learning new ideas presented in a text. Also, they draw upon common knowledge and cognitive processes. Improving skills in one should improve skills in the other. All LDC template tasks connect reading and writing.



*"One often-overlooked tool for improving students' reading, as well as their learning from text, is writing."*

Writing to Read, Graham & Hebert, 2010

### 5. LDC uses back-mapping.

The LDC framework requires teachers to identify the specific literacy skills students need to acquire if they are to succeed on a task. This “back mapping” from the larger task allows teachers to plan deliberate instruction for each of those needed skills



*“Standards-based instruction targets the quality of performance we want from students. With the quality of the performance expected of students clearly in mind, teachers plan and conduct lessons aimed at teaching students how to achieve these specific characteristics.”*

The Standards-Based Instructional Process, WestEd 2002

### 6. LDC fosters a responsive system.

The LDC system encourages teachers to adjust their instruction. They can use the system to “spiral” the instruction of literacy skills and content or to “scaffold” in response to the formative information they gather on student performance. This allows teachers to provide the right level of work at the right time for classes, groups of students or individual students. Teachers can use the framework to move students to more challenging levels.



*“Responsive secondary teachers respond to students as individuals with unique needs.”*

The Productive High School, 2001

### 7. LDC encourages local choice.

With a balanced focus on results as well as means, the LDC strategy embodies the philosophy of the CCSS by aligning with what students should know and be able to do but not dictating a specific curriculum or instructional program. Those choices are the province of teachers, schools, districts and states. According to Phillips and Wong, a great advantage of the common core standards is that good practice now can be shared broadly while providing local flexibility for deciding how best to teach the core.



*“By emphasizing required achievements, the Standards leave room for teachers, curriculum developers, and states to determine how those goals should be reached and what additional topics should be addressed.”*

Common Core State Standards, 2010

### 8. LDC strives to be teacher-friendly.

If teachers, schools, districts, and states are to succeed at teaching students to meet proficiency on the CCSS, they need solutions that are doable. Elegant solutions save time; they do not add to the already heavy daily work of teaching. Not only do teachers deserve such tools, their expertise should be used to design and test them. LDC was established for both purposes.



*“The sheer magnitude of the teaching task is immense.”*

Judith W. Little, cited in The Productive High School, 2001

## A Closer Look

These, then, are the principles of LDC. They have been used in the pilot year and frame the content of the following chapters where you will find particulars about the components and the strategies of LDC. The bottom line throughout this book? How teachers across disciplines can use their creativity and expertise to create powerful reading and writing learning experiences for their students. The CCSS makes it possible for the work to be shared nationwide.

In the chapters that follow, we will explain and give examples of the requirements for creating, using and sharing quality literacy-saturated instructional designs built on the LDC framework. The framework is minimalist, with the smallest possible set of requirements providing glue while making the most of opportunities for creativity and next-generation design. This book shows clearly what it means to use LDC in many kinds of classrooms.



### so what about content?

The template tasks are ready for whatever content a teacher wants to use with them. Teachers from some of the pilot sites recommend that teachers “play around” with the standards and their content. One suggested that the first step in using this strategy is to select a topic that is engaging and exciting to students, take a standard and plug it into different tasks, tie it into learning targets, and triage the literacy skills that are most needed to get to an end point in three weeks or whatever time the teacher has allotted for the task.

“If you plan this instruction right,” according to an Oregon history teacher who pioneered the LDC strategy, “you do not take time away from your content. In the end, the students will learn the content better than if they had not worked on their literacy skills at all.”



## Teacher Profile

*Alex Shubert, 7th Grade Science  
Elizabethtown Area Middle School*

At the beginning of the year, our assistant superintendent said, “Hey, we’re going to develop these writing modules and teaching tasks, and put them together and teach them to the kids. The benefit is that they’ll address the common core standards and the writing tied to it.” Well, I’d heard the common core was coming, but it hadn’t really impacted me yet. I teach a lab class with a research paper, though, so it wasn’t a big stretch for me to say, “Sure, I can try to develop a writing module.”

Thinking back, it was very overwhelming. As a science teacher, I’ve had no formal training in how to teach the writing process. I can spot grammar mistakes and spelling errors, no problem, but as far as the structure of a paper, I don’t have a solid enough background for teaching those strategies. But the way the tasks are written, you can just plug and play with different topics. And a lot of people were willing to help. Another seventh grade science teacher and I partnered to develop two modules, and the reading specialist was involved in our planning; I also co-taught one of the modules with her, and that went well. I was surprised that the students weren’t as resistant to writing as I thought they might be.

As a result of this involvement, I’ve tried new ways of teaching. For example, today I tried a strategy I’ve never done before: the Socratic seminar – and it was great. It helped to really bring out ideas, and maybe even expose some misunderstandings. So that was a good way to get feedback as to whether the students are really getting it, and also help prep them to write. This is my second time through the current module; I didn’t have to do again, but once you have



the chance, you really want to fix the mistakes and improve it. The first time went well, but this time is going very smoothly; I’m really pleased with it.

Yes, there’s some more time involved, but if the pros outweigh the cons, you adjust and adapt to streamline other areas of your teaching. And it kind of goes in bursts: the prep work’s up front, and once the prep work’s done, it runs pretty smoothly. Then there are certain points, like in two weeks I’ll collect their rough drafts, and then I’ll be under the gun to really read those well and return them within a day or two. That’s a challenge. But I’ve come to recognize

that there's a definite need for this kind of writing instruction somewhere in the curriculum.

Whether that falls on us or the English teachers, I'm not quite sure I know the answer. It depends how your school's set up. But I think if you can go across the curriculum that's great. Because you want it to be consistent, like from K through 12 you want to have some progression. We'll figure it out. But after field testing it, I would recommend this approach.

My absolute biggest suggestions for successfully creating and implementing a module are: To work with someone else to share the load and bounce off ideas; to look at model work – a sample module, sample student work – to make sure you choose a topic that is relevant or interesting to students within the confines of your standards and core content; and to find appropriate, age-level resources for the students.

## Quotes from Alex Shubert's Students

### Katie Neece

*"I like writing where you make up a story, as in my English class, so I hadn't done much writing on other types like informational, narrative or argumentative. In general science last year, we just read facts, but this year I had to write an argument for our study of animal welfare as to whether zoos were good for animals or not. First, I read articles and took notes, then I made a rough draft and edited it for a final copy. When I finished, I felt I knew the topic better than if I had just read about it in a textbook. The ideas were laid out much better because of the research and writing, and I learned the facts better because we went over it so many times. My teacher helped me improve my skill on organizing the material, and that has helped me in other classes. He thinks my writing has improved, and I think it is stronger, too."*

### Kyla Strickler

*"About the only writing I had done before in science was for posters. When I wrote an informational or persuasive essay this year, I couldn't just list details. I had to go and find out more information, take notes, see if I had enough, highlight what was most important, develop a theme, and then write a five-paragraph essay. This helped me a lot on understanding the material. Mrs. Cressman showed me how to pick out good examples, make everything flow better and use citations. I used these skills in social studies where I had to pick an Asian country, use multiple resources about it and write an eight-paragraph essay. I had more information than I needed, so I had to go back and decide what was most important, and that helped me understand my notes better. I used the Oasis program with a shorter essay I had written, and it helped me look at my writing and think it through. I had to judge it. Did I do great or did I need to work harder on some skills?"*

## CHAPTER 2:

# Building High Quality Teaching Tasks from Templates

*“What was different in the four classrooms was what students were actually being asked to do, and the degree to which the teacher was able to engage students in the work by scaffolding their learning up to the complexity of the task she was asking them to do.”*

– Richard Elmore, Harvard University

The LDC system starts with the premise that it is the “task” or assignment – what students are asked to do – that sets the framework for their learning and the skills they will develop. Think of the power of a set of key questions for teachers: What are students being asked to do? Is it meaningful? Why or why not? How are we measuring their work?

In LDC short-hand, we call this set of questions “What Task?” LDC begins with a focus on providing tools for teachers to use for designing meaningful tasks for students – tasks that connect the CCSS in reading and writing with the content, texts and issues teachers seek to teach.

Teachers who have used the LDC tools to design tasks are reporting over and over that students, even those who have been reluctant readers and writers, now not only read and write more fluently they also master the content at higher levels than before. While these reports will be explored in greater depth, early feedback is quite positive.

In Chapter 2, we explore LDC tasks up close. This chapter covers:

- Template Tasks
- LDC Prototype Template Task Collection
- LDC Teaching Tasks
- Scoring Student Work

## Ldc words to design by

**Template Task:** A “fill-in-the-blank” sentence “shell” built off of the Common Core State Standards in reading and writing that can be used to create assignments or assessments.

**Template Task Collection:** A series of template tasks. The prototype incorporated in this book is organized by writing type – argumentation, informational/explanatory and narrative – and text structure (also called “modes of discourse such as definition, description, and so forth).

**Teaching Task (or plain old “task”):** A “completed” LDC template task in which teachers include the content/issue to be addressed, specify the text they will teach and identify the product to be produced. A full teaching task also includes background information that introduces students to the assignment and an optional “extension” in which the students exhibit or present their product publicly.

**Rubric:** An explicit set of criteria used for assessing a particular type of work. LDC has developed rubrics for Argumentation template tasks and for Informational/Explanatory template tasks.

**Student Work:** Exemplar student work that is an essential companion to the rubric. Exemplars are being developed locally by LDC partners. Ultimately the exemplars will come from multiple partner agreements and will be informed by emerging assessment systems.



## LDC Template Tasks

LDC template tasks are “fill-in-the-blank” sentence shells built off of the CCSS. Using them, teachers can create high quality student assignments that develop reading and writing skills in the context of learning science, history, literacy or some other content area in the middle or high school curriculum.

Here is an example of a type of LDC template task:

Level 1: After researching \_\_\_\_\_ (informational texts) on \_\_\_\_\_ (content), write a \_\_\_\_\_ (report or substitute) that defines \_\_\_\_\_ (term or concept) and explains \_\_\_\_\_ (content). Support your discussion with evidence from your research. L2: What \_\_\_\_\_ (conclusions or implications) can you draw?

No matter what the LDC template task, they all require teachers to create an assignment that asks students to:

- **Think**, in ways that prepare students for success in college and the workplace
- **Read, analyze, and comprehend** texts as specified by the common core
- **Write** products as specified by the common core
- **Apply** common core literacy standards to content (ELA, social studies, and/or science)

Each template task has the CCSS thinking demands hard-wired into it with space for teachers to insert reading, writing, and content expectations. Take a look at the chart that follows to see how this all works together.

## Reading

The following charts lay out potential text types (genre) that can be inserted into template tasks. There are two main text types:

### LITERATURE

Fiction	<b>Or substitute:</b> adventure stories, historical fiction, mysteries, fantasy, science fiction, realistic fiction, allegories, parodies, satire, graphic novels
Drama	<b>Or substitute:</b> One-act and multiple-act plays (both in written form and in film)
Poetry	<b>Or substitute:</b> narrative poems, lyrical poems, free verse poems, sonnets, odes, ballads, epics
Folk literature	<b>Or substitute:</b> myths, fables, fairy tales, legends, folktales, tall tales

### INFORMATIONAL TEXTS

Non-fiction	<b>Or substitute:</b> Textbooks/academic texts/articles, Journal/newspaper/magazine articles, Scientific/historical sources, primary source documents, guides/manuals, Scientific/technical/business articles/documents, political articles/documents, speeches
Narrative	<b>Or substitute:</b> accounts, opinions, interviews/memoirs, biographies, speeches
Reference books	<b>Or substitute:</b> encyclopedias, dictionaries, thesauruses, atlases, almanacs, guides, how-to books
Other	<b>Or substitute:</b> video, digital text, graphical information (e.g. pictures, videos, maps, time lines), simulations

## Thinking

### TEMPLATE TASK 1

After researching \_\_\_\_\_ (informational texts) on \_\_\_\_\_ (content), write \_\_\_\_\_ (essay or substitute) that argues your position on \_\_\_\_\_ (content). Support your position with evidence from your research. **L2 Be sure to acknowledge competing views. L3 Give examples from past or current events or issues to illustrate and clarify your position. (Argumentation/Analysis L1, L2, L3):**

#### EXAMPLE(S)

Task 1 SS (Argumentation/Analysis L1, L2, L3): After researching academic articles on censorship, write an editorial that argues your position on the use of filters by schools. Support your position with evidence from your research. Be sure to acknowledge competing views. Give examples from past or current events or issues to illustrate and clarify your position.

Task 1 SCI (Argumentation/Analysis L1, L2): After researching technical and academic articles on the use of pesticides in agriculture, write a speech that argues your position on its use in managing crop production. Support your position with evidence from your research. Be sure to acknowledge competing views.

### TEMPLATE TASK 2

[Insert question.] After reading \_\_\_\_\_ (literature or informational texts), write \_\_\_\_\_ (essay or substitute) that addresses the question and support your position with evidence from the text(s). **L2 Be sure to acknowledge competing views. L3 Give examples from past or current events or issues to illustrate and clarify your position. (Argumentation/Analysis L1, L2, L3):**

#### EXAMPLE(S)

Task 2 ELA (Argumentation/Analysis L1): Would you recommend *A Wrinkle in Time* to a middle school reader? After reading this science fiction novel, write a review that addresses the question and support your position with evidence from the text.

## Writing

Students are asked to write products established as essential for college readiness by the common core standards, products that persuade, inform, explain, or narrate.

Essay	<b>Or substitute:</b> review, article, editorial, speech, proposal
Report	<b>Or substitute:</b> article, lab report, manual
Narrative	<b>Or substitute:</b> article, account, biography, play/script

## Content

Teachers are asked to insert content that cuts across reading, analysis, and writing experiences using content expectations established by state, district and school policies and practices. As placeholder for local, discipline-specific decisions, we use “topics, issues, themes, and concepts” – the body of knowledge involved in a discipline – that students are expected to learn during a course of study.

Topic	<b>Such as:</b> the westward movement of the 1800’s
Issue	<b>Such as:</b> the impact of the westward movement on Native Americans
Theme	<b>Such as:</b> “rugged individualism” as an uniquely American theme in folklore
Concept	<b>Such as:</b> “manifest destiny”

Thus, the template task “shell” provides plenty of opportunity for teachers’ choices based on their state/district content standards, curriculum map and student interests and skills. What it does especially well is save teachers time because they do not have to figure out how to incorporate the core standards from scratch. The structure already has done much of the work for them.

What is most important about this approach? The LDC template task holds tight on moving students to proficiency on CCSS expectations for reading and writing and offers significant choice in two ways: what is taught and to what level of difficulty. As we will discuss later in this book, these choice points not only impact one task in one moment of time but can be thought of in the context of a larger instructional strategy in which teachers scaffold text complexity, adjust levels of difficulty in student writing products and systematically orchestrate thinking demands over time within classrooms and across subjects and grades.

# LDC Prototype Template Task Collection

LDC has created a first set of template tasks organized around the intersection of writing types and text structures, relating both to the thinking demands and the interdependence of reading and writing outlined in the CCSS. The template tasks themselves can be found in the prototype LDC Template Task Collection. Examples are included throughout this chapter. Currently there are 29 template tasks in use. Eventually, additional tasks will be created and tested by LDC partners, including tasks that are more grade and subject area specific.

## Blueprint

The following provides a blueprint for the design of this original collection of LDC template tasks:

1. There are three main categories of Writing Types based on CCSS:

- Argumentation (CCSS for Writing, Standard 1)
- Informational or Explanatory (CCSS for Writing, Standard 2)
- Narrative (CCSS for Writing, Standard 3)

2. Within those writing types, there are 9 important text structures (sometimes called “modes of discourse”) that the CCSS require students to be able to do:

- Definition: explaining the explicit and implicit meanings of a concept, topic or idea
- Description: providing details that illustrate a character, place or event
- Procedural-Sequential: relating chronological or sequential events in some order
- Synthesis: summarizing; integrating important elements of an idea, concept or topic
- Analysis: examining by breaking down the elements of an idea, topic, concept issue or theme
- Comparison: contrasting similarities and differences
- Evaluation: providing a point of view based on a set of principles or criteria; critiquing; recommending
- Problem-Solution: examining a problem and proposing a solution(s)
- Cause-Effect: identifying a cause for an event or condition and examining the effect(s)

The chart below displays these categories as a single system and shows how LDC connects the CCSS demands related to writing types and the text structures into template tasks that are suited for the specific subjects shown in grades 6-12.

	Argumentation	Informational or Explanatory	Narrative
<b>Definition</b>		ELA, social studies, science	
<b>Description</b>		ELA, social studies, science	ELA, social studies
<b>Procedural-Sequential</b>		social studies, science	ELA, social studies
<b>Synthesis</b>		ELA, social studies, science	
<b>Analysis</b>	ELA, social studies, science	ELA, social studies, science	
<b>Comparison</b>	ELA, social studies, science	ELA, social studies, science	
<b>Evaluation</b>	ELA, social studies, science		
<b>Problem-Solution</b>	social studies, science		
<b>Cause-Effect</b>	social studies, science	social studies, science	

## Task Types

Within most of the categories above, there currently are two types of fill-in-the-blank shells: “essential question” and “after reading.” Here are examples of each from the Argumentation/Analysis category:

**Task 1 Template (Argumentation/Analysis L1, L2, L3):** After researching \_\_\_\_\_ (informational texts) on \_\_\_\_\_ (content), write \_\_\_\_\_ (essay or substitute) that argues your position on \_\_\_\_\_ (content). Support your position with evidence from your research. L2 Be sure to acknowledge competing views. L3 Give examples from past or current events or issues to illustrate and clarify your position.

**Task 2 Template (Argumentation/Analysis L1, L2, L3):** [Insert question] After reading \_\_\_\_\_ (literature or informational texts), write \_\_\_\_\_ (essay or substitute) that addresses the question and support your position with evidence from the text(s). L2 Be sure to acknowledge competing views. L3 Give examples from past or current events or issues to illustrate and clarify your position.



And here are two examples from the informational/explanatory category:

**Task 11 Template (Informational or Explanatory/Definition L1):** After researching \_\_\_\_\_ (informational texts) on \_\_\_\_\_ (content), write a \_\_\_\_\_ (report or substitute) that defines \_\_\_\_\_ (term or concept) and explains \_\_\_\_\_ (content). Support your discussion with evidence from your research. L2 What \_\_\_\_\_ (conclusions or implications) can you draw?

**Task 12 Template (Informational or Explanatory/Definition L1):** [Insert question] After reading \_\_\_\_\_ (literature or informational texts), write \_\_\_\_\_ (essay, report, or substitute) that defines \_\_\_\_\_ (term or concept) and explains \_\_\_\_\_ (content). Support your discussion with evidence from the text(s). L2 What \_\_\_\_\_ (conclusions or implications) can you draw?

Finally, here are two narrative examples:

**Task 26 Template (Narrative/Description L1, L2, L3):** After researching \_\_\_\_\_ (informational texts) on \_\_\_\_\_ (content), write \_\_\_\_\_ (narrative or substitute) that describes \_\_\_\_\_ (content). L2 Use \_\_\_\_\_ (stylistic devices) to develop a narrative. L3 Use \_\_\_\_\_ (techniques) to convey multiple storylines.

**Task 27 Template (Narrative/Description L1, L2):** [Insert question] After reading \_\_\_\_\_ (literature or informational texts) about \_\_\_\_\_ (content), write \_\_\_\_\_ (narrative or substitute) from the perspective of \_\_\_\_\_ (content). L2 Use \_\_\_\_\_ (stylistic devices) to develop a narrative effect in your work. L3 Use \_\_\_\_\_ (techniques) to convey multiple storylines.

## CCSS Standards

When we talk about the CCSS being “hard-wired” into each template, we mean that a set number of specific CCSS Anchor Standards are addressed by the template – no matter what choices that the teacher makes (e.g., content, text, product) as they complete the template. Other CCSS Standards vary, depending on how the template is built out.

Take a look at the Argumentation/Analysis template task above. Notice on the following page how the Common Core Anchor Standards (built-in and “when appropriate” to the teaching task) are hard wired into the Argumentation Template Tasks:

READING STANDARDS FOR ARGUMENTATION	
“Built-in” Reading Standards	“When Appropriate” Reading Standards
1 – Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.	3 – Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.
2 – Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.	5 – Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
4 – Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.	6 – Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
10 – Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.	7 – Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
	8 – Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.
	9 – Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
WRITING STANDARDS FOR ARGUMENTATION	
“Built-in” Writing Standards	“When Appropriate” Writing Standards
1 – Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.	2 – Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
4 – Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.	3 – Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
5 – Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.	6 – Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.
9 – Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.	7 – Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
10 – Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audience.	8 – Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.

Now, take a look at the Informational or Explanatory template task above and notice how the Common Core Anchor Standards are hard-wired into the Informational/Explanatory Template Tasks:

READING STANDARDS FOR INFORMATIONAL OR EXPLANATORY	
“Built In” Reading Standards	“When Appropriate” Reading Standards
1 – Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.	3 – Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.
2 – Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.	5 – Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g. a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
4 – Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.	7 – Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
6 – Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.	8 – Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.
10 – Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.	9 – Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
WRITING STANDARDS FOR INFORMATIONAL OR EXPLANATORY	
“Built-in” Writing Standards	“When Appropriate” Writing Standards
2 – Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.	1 – Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
4 – Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.	3 – Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
5 – Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.	6 – Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.
9 – Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.	7 – Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
10 – Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audience.	8 – Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.

And finally, do the same for the narrative standards:

READING STANDARDS FOR NARRATIVE	
“Built In” Reading Standards	“When Appropriate” Reading Standards
1 – Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.	3 – Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text. (Always applies with narrative L2 and L3 tasks)
2 – Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.	5 – Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole. (Always applies with narrative L2 and L3 tasks)
4 – Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.	7 – Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
6 – Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.	8 – Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.
10 – Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.	9 – Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
WRITING STANDARDS FOR NARRATIVE	
“Built-in” Writing Standards	“When Appropriate” Writing Standards
3 – Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.	1 – Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
4 – Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.	2 – Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
5 – Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.	6 – Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.
9 – Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.	7 – Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
10 – Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audience.	8 – Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.



## Building Teaching Tasks from Templates

“Teaching tasks” are what teachers create when they fill in all the blanks on the template task selected from the task collection and build it out into a quality assignments for students. Teaching tasks are extended classroom assignments for students that teachers build by filling in LDC template tasks with specific content, text(s) and requested product. Taught over an approximately 2-4 week period, the teaching task establishes demands for students that result in their completion of a product which can be scored.

The template task collection is filled with examples of teaching tasks for each template task. Here is an example for Argumentation/Analysis, using the “essential question” template:

**Task 2 Template (Argumentation/Analysis L1, L2, L3):** [Insert question] After reading \_\_\_\_\_ (literature or informational texts), write \_\_\_\_\_ (essay or substitute) that addresses the question and support your position with evidence from the text(s). **L2** Be sure to acknowledge competing views. **L3** Give examples from past or current events or issues to illustrate and clarify your position.

*Appropriate for:* ELA, social studies, science

### **Teaching Task Example(s):**

**Task 2 ELA Example:** Would you recommend *A Wrinkle in Time* to a middle school reader? After reading this science fiction novel, write a review that addresses the question and support your position with evidence from the text.

**Task 2 Social Studies Example:** How did the political views of the signers of the Constitution impact the American political system? After reading *Founding Brothers: The Revolutionary Generation*, write a report that addresses the question and support your position with evidence from the text.

**Task 2 Science Example:** Does genetic testing have the potential to significantly impact how we treat disease? After reading scientific sources, write a report that addresses the question and support your position with evidence from the texts. **L2** Be sure to acknowledge competing views. **L3** Give examples from past or current events or issues to illustrate and clarify your position.

Here is another example, this time for Informational or Explanatory, using the “after researching” template:

**Task 1 | Template:** After researching \_\_\_\_\_ (informational texts) on \_\_\_\_\_ (content), write a \_\_\_\_\_ (report or substitute) that defines (term or concept) and explains \_\_\_\_\_ (content). Support your discussion with evidence from your research. L2 What \_\_\_\_\_ (conclusions or implications) can you draw?

*Appropriate for:* ELA, social studies, science

**Teaching Task Example(s):**

**Task 1 | ELA Example:** After researching articles on modernism in American literature, write a report that defines “modernism” and explains its impact on contemporary arts. Support your discussion with evidence from your research.

**Task 1 | Social Studies Example:** After researching articles and political documents on government lobbyists, write a report that defines “lobbying” and explains who and what lobbyists are and the role they play in our political system. Support your discussion with evidence from your research. L2 What conclusions can you draw?

**Task 1 | Science Example:** After researching scientific articles on magnetism, write a report that defines “magnetism” and explains its role in the planetary system. Support your discussion with evidence from your research.

Notice that each completed teaching task uses the same template. Even though there is significant difference in the content, texts, student products and level of question selected, each teaching task is built on the same chassis. The common template task allows teachers to reinforce similar reading and writing skills in different subjects and at different levels of difficulty across years, held together by the “glue” of a commonly shared template task that sits under each unique teaching task.

It is this flexibility in the LDC template task that allows teachers, when they are designing teaching tasks, to use their deep knowledge of content, as well as their pedagogical expertise in scaffolding student learning and experiences over time. For each choice, teachers are balancing “what” to include and “at what level.” There is a lot to consider and use in making those choices:

- District/state content standards
- Curriculum maps
- Student learning needs/strengths
- Strategies for scaffolding the difficulty of a teaching task
- Strategies for designing a particular task in the context of other teaching tasks in the course of a year or over years

Here is a closer look at the choice points and ways the CCSS can support teacher choice:

### **1. Teachers select the level of difficulty within a template task.**

Teachers can vary the skill demands of students by changing the level of task demand, with up to three possible tiers:

- Level 1 (L1) refers to the most fundamental “level of difficulty” and narrows the task to those skills in reading, writing and critical thinking that are essential for the task.
- Level 2 (L2) refers to a “next step up” skill or cognitive demand such as managing more than one point of view or multiple processes.
- Level 3 (L3) adds additional demand to the task in which student writers are asked to make connections and use background knowledge to reflect implications beyond a specific topic.

Note that some template tasks have only one level, while others have two or three.

### **2. Teachers choose reading materials.**

The LDC template tasks let teachers make adjustments by varying text type and complexity and by choosing the number and length of texts students are asked to read. The CCSS outline the use of a full variety of texts, and LDC template tasks are structured so that teachers can make strategic choices from the CCSS-aligned range of reading materials. Appendix B of the CCSS is especially helpful in aligning text selection and ensuring reading rigor. Also, systems such as the Lexile scores provide teachers insight into text difficulty.

## stay tuned

There is an emerging national conversation that focuses on the kinds of work students need to do to successfully meet the CCSS in reading. Teachers should be familiar with the issue and follow the thinking as it develops about which of two ways they should build their template tasks for reading requirements:

1. Making tasks totally “text dependent:” A text-dependent task is defined as a task that can be answered exclusively by reference to the text or texts. Such a task asks students to establish what follows and what does not follow directly from the text or texts. A text-dependent task requires no information or evidence from other sources.
2. Adding a requirement for “synthesizing sources and knowledge:” A synthesizing sources task requires students to read texts in order to establish what follows or does not follow directly from them, as in text-depending reading above. This task also asks student to connect what they learned to a larger body of content knowledge. A good example is the Level 3 portion of a template task in the LDC prototype template task collection.

David Coleman and Sue Pimental, who are primary authors of the CCSS reading/writing portions, describe the reading goals for both types as “precision and attentiveness to exactly what is said and not said. The aim is to cultivate a very close attention to the details and broader moves of a text. You might call it reading like a detective.”

Let's take a look at potential reading suggestions from the CCSS to design an ELA teaching task. The CCSS suggests literature (stories, drama and poetry) and varied informational texts such as “personal essays, speeches, opinion pieces, essays about art or literature, biographies, memoirs, journalism and historical, scientific, technical or economic accounts (including digital sources) written for a broad audience.” The choices go way beyond a short story or novel.

If we drill down to the grade level standards for ELA, the CCSS outline even more specific examples of particular texts to use. Here are some examples of the standards, each suggesting an opportunity to use a specific kind of text:

### ELA LITERATURE

#### **GRADE 6 STANDARD 9:**

Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories) in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics.

#### **GRADES 11-12 STANDARD 9:**

Demonstrate knowledge of 18th, 19th and early 20th century foundational works of American literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics.

### ELA INFORMATIONAL

#### **GRADE 6 STANDARD 9:**

Compare and contrast one author's presentation of events with that of another (e.g., a memoir written by and a biography on the same person).

#### **GRADES 11-12 STANDARD 9:**

Analyze 17th, 18th and 19th century foundational U.S. documents of historical and literary significance (including The Declaration of Independence, the Preamble to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address) for their themes, purposes, and rhetorical features.

For history/social studies, science and other technical subjects, text choices should focus on important content issues within the disciplines. District/local standards typically provide teachers with structures for their focus. It also is important that these texts are selected with specific difficulty levels in mind to intentionally move students from their current reading skills to higher demands.

### **3. Teachers choose student products, or writing demands.**

Based on the CCSS, each LDC template task offers teachers a suggested student product, or written demand, along with appropriate substitutes that connect with its writing type and text structure (e.g., Argumentation/Analysis). Here are some suggestions to follow to ensure the type of academic writing demanded by the CCSS:

- Argumentation template tasks: Essay or a review, an article, an editorial, a speech or a proposal.
- Informational or Explanatory template tasks: Report or an article, a lab report, a manual or another technical product.
- Narrative template tasks: an article, an account, a biography, a script for a play or other creative option.

These choice points on written product offer teachers many different instructional options within a classroom and across classrooms – teaching one type of product while varying the level of difficulty over the course of a year, teaching different products and similar strategies. One parameter to note is that narrative approaches – stories, poems, scripts – should be addressed as narrative and not be used as a substitute for argumentation or informational products.

Additionally, while the CCSS and LDC template tasks have established what written demands can be expected, the level of academic writing to be demanded is in the process of being established by LDC partners and CCSS assessment consortia.

### **4. Teachers choose content.**

Finally, the template tasks are designed for teachers to select the content they will teach, using the expectations set by state and district content standards. Teachers also can use their perspectives on the types of subject-specific content students need to know and need time to delve into or grapple with through reading and writing about it. Depending on the template, teachers have the option of selecting specific topics, issues, themes and concepts – the body of knowledge involved in a discipline – that students are expected to learn during a course of study.

Take an example of the possibilities for U.S. history or American literature:

- A topic such as the westward movement of the 1800s
- An issue such as the impact of the westward movement on Native Americans
- A theme such as “rugged individualism” as a uniquely American theme in folklore
- A concept such as “manifest destiny”



## 5. Teachers prepare task to give to students.

Additionally, teachers prepare the teaching task for students by providing them with an introduction. This “background” statement introduces the task to students, providing them with the necessary context and ideas on why the task deserves study. Teachers also can add an extension activity as an option to the task that calls for students to apply their written product in a real world activity such as publishing their article in a school or local newspaper or presenting a proposal to the school board or city council.

Here’s an example of how each of the task elements fit together to create a fully-developed teaching task that is ready to give to students. The common format shared in this chart allows tasks to be designed and easily shared among colleagues, fostering collaboration, feedback and strategic instructional planning within and across classrooms.

**Background:** Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. creates an interesting social environment in his short story, “Harrison Bergeron,” in which all people are made equal by the government. In this module, you are to consider an interesting question raised in the story about this utopian world and argue for or against the world that is created in Vonnegut’s story, “Harrison Bergeron.”

**Prompt:** Should we all be equal in every sense of the word? After reading “Harrison Bergeron,” write an essay that addresses the question and support your position with evidence from the text.

**Extension:** Create a multimedia presentation drawn from your essay in which you describe a utopian society for a presentation on community night.

For each completed teaching task document, the identified CCSS and rubric area also are included for use by the teacher and for sharing with others.

To think about how these decisions play out, take a look at the graphic organizer on LDC Task Development Basics.

# Ldc task development basics

This one-page organizer summarizes how LDC teaching tasks are created.

## 1. Choose Your Template Task

Your template task can:

- Be argumentation, informational or explanatory, or narrative.
- Use an essential question or an “after researching” task.
- Call for students to develop a definition, a description, a procedural-sequential piece, a synthesis, an analysis, a comparison, an evaluation, a problem-solving piece, or a discussion of cause and effect.

## 2. Choose Your Topic

Your choice should:

- Address a major issue in your discipline (big enough to be a good investment of 2 to 4 weeks of class time).
- Fit the state and local standards for which you are responsible.
- Make sense as a subject to teach during the weeks you are planning to schedule this task.

## 5. Create Your Teaching Task

Your prompt should:

- Use the exact wording of the template.
- Use your topic, reading texts, and writing text choices to fill in the blanks and brackets.
- Be both challenging and feasible for students, with a balance of reading demands and writing demands that works well for the intended grade and content.
- Require sustained writing and effective use of ideas and evidence from the reading texts.
- Be built out for students by adding introductory background statement and ending with extension if applicable.

## 3. Choose Texts Students Will Read

Your choices should:

- Address your topic.
- Be short enough to allow close reading and careful analysis.
- Use and develop academic understanding and vocabulary.
- Where possible, include models of the kind of text students will be writing.

Or, you can specify a topic and assign students to research the issue to select texts that address the issue.

## 4. Choose Texts Students Will Write

Your choice should:

- Be a good fit for your topic, template task, and students.
- Where possible, resemble writing students may need to do in adult life (for example, make an argument in a letter to the editor, or explain a process in a memo to a colleague.)

While the graphic organizer lays out steps for designing a task, the process actually is very fluid and allows teachers to enter it at different points. As teachers are determining “what” to include in the template, the notion of “what level” becomes particularly important. For example, teachers can choose to up the level of text complexity and use a student product that is less difficult in order to focus on reading instruction. Or, they may choose to focus on writing instruction (e.g., a 3-5 page essay) and use a text that is more accessible for students. The sky is the limit on teacher options as they design the task.



## how one librarian makes it easier

When newly hired school librarian Heather Kenes told her superintendent that she was interested in research on reading, she had no idea that remark would so completely shape her first year on the job. Kenes immediately became the lead resource person for the 10-teacher team at Lebanon (PA) Middle School working with the LDC model. Her enthusiasm and skills overcame the teachers' initial concern about being able to find reading resources that were not textbook-based and required students to analyze and interpret the content.

"Teachers come to me with an idea or a topic, and as a librarian, my job is to navigate the millions of websites to find the sources teachers need and encourage teachers to venture away from the textbook and use other formats for information," says Kenes. "While many teachers want to embrace technology in their teaching, oftentimes the amount of information online is overwhelming." One tool she uses to organize the information is the Lexile levels. They also provide teachers and students with an understanding of students' current reading levels and give a clear picture of where they need to be to be college-ready.

Using Lexile scores on reading levels of materials, Kenes realized the content of many of the typical middle school books she was ordering was inaccessible to the students, especially English-language learners. She went on a hunt for less complex texts that also provided high content. "Sometimes I modify the text in articles myself, getting rid of the passive voice and adding bullets to make it visually more understandable," she says. "The students like the color-coded Lexile scores and gradually start selecting harder articles to read."

Kenes uses every source possible to find appropriate material for the core subjects. In addition to print, she makes extensive use of electronic sources, trying out different data base subscriptions and videos such as those found at Safari Montage and United Streaming. She coaches students on making good electronic searches, "showing them to not use just their first result on Google and helping them understand what plagiarism is." She sits with the LDC teachers at their weekly meetings and learns ahead of time about searches she will need to make – everything from why King Alexander was called "great" to arguments in favor of a national speed limit (video clips of car crashes came in handy for that one).

The skills that students are acquiring because of the LDC model impress Kenes, who sees "kids who are not afraid to write anymore because they are doing it so frequently in so many subjects."



## LDC Template Task Rubrics

LDC template tasks include standard scoring rubrics that support teachers in scoring student performance on CCSS in the content areas of English language arts, science and social studies. In the current prototype collection of template tasks, all argumentation tasks use the same rubric, all informational/explanatory tasks use another and all narrative tasks use another. They use common design principles, with variations that are appropriate for differences in task type.

These LDC prototype template task collection rubrics are analytic, written to describe demands (“do this” and qualities “how well.”) LDC colleague Gary McCormick of Kenton County, Kentucky, calls them “purpose specific” rubrics. Teachers can refer to the CCSS grade-by-grade standards to get further descriptions of what is highlighted in the rubric.

Using shared rubrics can foster powerful teacher collaboration. The shared rubrics make it easier for groups of teachers, responsible for varied subjects and grades, to share scoring, analyze student results, develop the same language about the key traits of high quality student work and work together to think through next steps in teaching. This can become a potent form of professional learning and academic community building led by teachers themselves.

Ultimately, the rubrics will be supported with student work examples that exemplify the different scoring levels. LDC partners are currently working on these benchmarks. There are three rubrics in the LDC Template Task Collection, one for argumentation, another for informational/explanatory tasks, and a narrative task rubric. Let’s take a look at all three rubrics.

*They are writing so much more and [they] don’t realize how much better they are getting at it. I see them getting more comfortable with it.*

Librarian





# scoring rubric for argumentation template tasks

Scoring Elements	Not Yet		Approaches Expectations		Meets Expectations		Advanced
	1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5	4
Focus	Attempts to address prompt, but lacks focus or is off-task.		Addresses prompt appropriately and establishes a position, but focus is uneven.		Addresses prompt appropriately and maintains a clear, steady focus. Provides a generally convincing position.		Addresses all aspects of prompt appropriately with a consistently strong focus and convincing position.
Controlling Idea	Attempts to establish a claim, but lacks a clear purpose. (L2) Makes no mention of counter claims.		Establishes a claim. (L2) Makes note of counter claims.		Establishes a credible claim. (L2) Develops claim and counter claims fairly.		Establishes and maintains a substantive and credible claim or proposal. (L2) Develops claims and counter claims fairly and thoroughly.
Reading/ Research	Attempts to reference reading materials to develop response, but lacks connections or relevance to the purpose of the prompt.		Presents information from reading materials relevant to the purpose of the prompt with minor lapses in accuracy or completeness.		Accurately presents details from reading materials relevant to the purpose of the prompt to develop argument or claim.		Accurately and effectively presents important details from reading materials to develop argument or claim.
Development	Attempts to provide details in response to the prompt, but lacks sufficient development or relevance to the purpose of the prompt. (L3) Makes no connections or a connection that is irrelevant to argument or claim.		Presents appropriate details to support and develop the focus, controlling idea, or claim, with minor lapses in the reasoning, examples, or explanations. (L3) Makes a connection with a weak or unclear relationship to argument or claim.		Presents appropriate and sufficient details to support and develop the focus, controlling idea, or claim. (L3) Makes a relevant connection to clarify argument or claim.		Presents thorough and detailed information to effectively support and develop the focus, controlling idea, or claim. (L3) Makes a clarifying connection(s) that illuminates argument and adds depth to reasoning.
Organization	Attempts to organize ideas, but lacks control of structure.		Uses an appropriate organizational structure for development of reasoning and logic, with minor lapses in structure and/or coherence.		Maintains an appropriate organizational structure to address specific requirements of the prompt. Structure reveals the reasoning and logic of the argument.		Maintains an organizational structure that intentionally and effectively enhances the presentation of information as required by the specific prompt. Structure enhances development of the reasoning and logic of the argument.
Conventions	Attempts to demonstrate standard English conventions, but lacks cohesion and control of grammar, usage, and mechanics. Sources are used without citation.		Demonstrates an uneven command of standard English conventions and cohesion. Uses language and tone with some inaccurate, inappropriate, or uneven features. Inconsistently cites sources.		Demonstrates a command of standard English conventions and cohesion, with few errors. Response includes language and tone appropriate to the audience, purpose, and specific requirements of the prompt. Cites sources using appropriate format with only minor errors.		Demonstrates and maintains a well-developed command of standard English conventions and cohesion, with few errors. Response includes language and tone consistently appropriate to the audience, purpose, and specific requirements of the prompt. Consistently cites sources using appropriate format.
Content Understanding	Attempts to include disciplinary content in argument, but understanding of content is weak; content is irrelevant, inappropriate, or inaccurate.		Briefly notes disciplinary content relevant to the prompt; shows basic or uneven understanding of content; minor errors in explanation.		Accurately presents disciplinary content relevant to the prompt with sufficient explanations that demonstrate understanding.		Integrates relevant and accurate disciplinary content with thorough explanations that demonstrate in-depth understanding.

# scoring rubric for informational or explanatory template tasks

Scoring Elements	Not Yet		Approaches Expectations		Meets Expectations		Advanced
	1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5	4
Focus	Attempts to address prompt, but lacks focus or is off-task.		Addresses prompt appropriately, but with a weak or uneven focus.		Addresses prompt appropriately and maintains a clear, steady focus.		Addresses all aspects of prompt appropriately and maintains a strongly developed focus.
Controlling Idea	Attempts to establish a controlling idea, but lacks a clear purpose.		Establishes a controlling idea with a general purpose.		Establishes a controlling idea with a clear purpose maintained throughout the response.		Establishes a strong controlling idea with a clear purpose maintained throughout the response.
Reading/ Research	Attempts to present information in response to the prompt, but lacks connections or relevance to the purpose of the prompt. (L2) Does not address the credibility of sources as prompted.		Presents information from reading materials relevant to the purpose of the prompt with minor lapses in accuracy or completeness. (L2) Begins to address the credibility of sources when prompted.		Presents information from reading materials relevant to the prompt with accuracy and sufficient detail. (L2) Addresses the credibility of sources when prompted.		Accurately presents information relevant to all parts of the prompt with effective selection of sources and details from reading materials. (L2) Addresses the credibility of sources and identifies salient sources when prompted.
Development	Attempts to provide details in response to the prompt, including retelling, but lacks sufficient development or relevancy. (L2) Implication is missing, irrelevant, or illogical. (L3) Gap/unanswered question is missing or irrelevant.		Presents appropriate details to support the focus and controlling idea. (L2) Briefly notes a relevant implication or (L3) a relevant gap/unanswered question.		Presents appropriate and sufficient details to support the focus and controlling idea. (L2) Explains relevant and plausible implications, and (L3) a relevant gap/unanswered question.		Presents thorough and detailed information to strongly support the focus and controlling idea. (L2) Thoroughly discusses relevant and salient implications or consequences, and (L3) one or more significant gaps/unanswered questions.
Organization	Attempts to organize ideas, but lacks control of structure.		Uses an appropriate organizational structure to address the specific requirements of the prompt, with some lapses in coherence or awkward use of the organizational structure		Maintains an appropriate organizational structure to address the specific requirements of the prompt.		Maintains an organizational structure that intentionally and effectively enhances the presentation of information as required by the specific prompt.
Conventions	Attempts to demonstrate standard English conventions, but lacks cohesion and control of grammar, usage, and mechanics. Sources are used without citation.		Demonstrates an uneven command of standard English conventions and cohesion. Uses language and tone with some inaccurate, inappropriate, or uneven features. Inconsistently cites sources.		Demonstrates a command of standard English conventions and cohesion, with few errors. Response includes language and tone appropriate to the audience, purpose, and specific requirements of the prompt. Cites sources using an appropriate format with only minor errors.		Demonstrates and maintains a well-developed command of standard English conventions and cohesion, with few errors. Response includes language and tone consistently appropriate to the audience, purpose, and specific requirements of the prompt. Consistently cites sources using an appropriate format.
Content Understanding	Attempts to include disciplinary content in explanations, but understanding of content is weak; content is irrelevant, inappropriate, or inaccurate.		Briefly notes disciplinary content relevant to the prompt; shows basic or uneven understanding of content; minor errors in explanation.		Accurately presents disciplinary content relevant to the prompt with sufficient explanations that demonstrate understanding.		Integrates relevant and accurate disciplinary content with thorough explanations that demonstrate in-depth understanding.

# scoring rubric for narrative template tasks

Scoring Elements	Not Yet		Approaches Expectations		Meets Expectations		Advanced
	1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5	4
Focus	Attempts to address prompt but lacks focus or is off-task.		Addresses prompt appropriately, but with a weak or uneven focus		Addresses the prompt appropriately and maintains a clear, steady focus.		Addresses all aspects of the prompt appropriately and maintains a strongly developed focus.
Controlling Idea	Attempts to establish a theme or storyline, but lacks a clear or sustained purpose.		Establishes a theme or storyline, but purpose is weak, with some lapses in coherence.		Establishes a theme or storyline, with a well-developed purpose carried through the narrative.		Establishes a compelling theme or storyline, with a well developed purpose carried through the narrative through skillful use of narrative techniques.
Reading/ Research	Directly restates information from reading materials, interviews, and/or visual materials; uses materials inaccurately, OR information from source materials is irrelevant for the purpose at hand.		Uses reading materials, interviews, and/or visual materials with minor lapses in cohesion, accuracy or relevance.		Accurately integrates reading material, interviews, and/or visual material to authenticate the narrative.		Accurately and seamlessly integrates reading material, interviews, and/or visual material to authenticate the narrative
Development	Descriptions of experiences, individuals, and/or events are overly simplified or lack details. L2 Attempts to use stylistic devices (e.g., imagery, tone, humor, suspense) but devices are used awkwardly or do not serve the purpose of the narrative.		Develops experiences, individuals, and/or events with some detail but sense of time, place, or character remains at the surface level. L2 Uses appropriate stylistic devices (e.g., imagery, tone, humor, suspense) unevenly.		Develops experiences, individuals, and/or events with sufficient detail to add depth and complexity to the sense of time, place, or character. L2 Uses appropriate stylistic devices (e.g., imagery, tone, humor, suspense) to support the purpose of the narrative.		Elaborates on experiences, individuals, and/or events with comprehensive detail to add depth and complexity to the sense of time, place, or character. L2 Skillfully integrates appropriate stylistic devices (e.g. imagery, tone, humor, suspense) to support the purpose of the narrative.
Organization	Attempts to use a narrative structure; composition is disconnected or rambling.		Applies a narrative structure (chronological or descriptive), with some lapses in coherence or awkward use of the organizational structure.		Applies a narrative structure (chronological or descriptive) appropriate to the purpose, task, and audience; storyline clearly conveys the theme or purpose		Applies a complex narrative structure (chronological or descriptive) appropriate to the purpose, task and audience. that enhances communication of theme or purpose and keeps the reader engaged
Conventions	Lacks control of grammar, usage, and mechanics; little or ineffective use of transitions.		Demonstrates an uneven command of standard English; inconsistently uses transitions between sentences and paragraphs to connect ideas.		Demonstrates a command of standard English conventions with few errors; consistently uses transitions between sentences and paragraphs to connect ideas. Provides bibliography or works consulted when prompted.		Demonstrates a well-developed command of standard English conventions; effectively uses transitions between sentences and paragraphs to connect ideas. Provides bibliography or works consulted when prompted.
Content Understanding	Attempts to include disciplinary content, but understanding of content is weak; content is irrelevant, inappropriate, or inaccurate.		Briefly notes disciplinary content relevant to the prompt; shows basic or uneven understanding of content; minor errors in explanations.		Accurately presents disciplinary content relevant to the prompt with sufficient explanations that demonstrate understanding.		Integrates relevant and accurate disciplinary content with thorough explanations that demonstrate in-depth understanding.

In order to be complete, LDC tasks need student work that accompanies the rubric. As LDC partners use the task bank, they will begin to amass student work that represents different levels of work, across grades and subject areas. At this point, the work is localized, and partners are developing their own benchmarks. Pennsylvania is the first site to move to create statewide sample papers, under the leadership of Barb Smith of IU 13. Other partners are working at district and school levels, with the expectation that scoring will expand as the work progresses.



## What Makes a Great Teaching Task?

The CCSS and the LDC framework “push the envelope” for students, on the premise that with clear goals and strong supports, they can read and write at much higher levels. Consequently, the teaching tasks must be challenging. The LDC Design Team is working with Measured Progress to develop a high-quality system for giving feedback on task and module quality.

In the meantime, to help teachers make sure what they are asking students to do is as strong as can be, we offer a simple checklist for a great teaching task. A quality LDC task:

- Addresses content essential to the discipline – informed by local and state standards – inviting students to engage deeply in thinking and literacy practices around that issue.
- Makes effective use of the template task’s writing mode (argumentation, informational/explanatory, or narrative).
- Selects reading texts that use and develop academic understanding and vocabulary.
- Designs a writing prompt that requires sustained writing and effective use of ideas and evidence from the reading texts.
- Establishes a teaching task that is both challenging and feasible for students, with a balance of reading demands and writing demands that works well for the intended grade and content.

And ...

- Follows the LDC requirements for building a teaching task (as described in the technical specifications for LDC modules in chapter 3). This allows for sharing of work across classrooms, districts and states.

Once the design work is finished, teachers must turn to making sure students develop the skills to complete the task successfully with a product that can be scored. This is the LDC module – and the subject of the next chapter.



## Teacher Profile

*Sean Houseknecht, 7th Grade Science  
Elizabethtown Area Middle School*

To be honest, I wasn't aware of the common core standards prior to this, and I didn't know what a "module" was. We tend to have a lot of new initiatives introduced, so I think there's always a little bit of hesitation with new things; a lot of teachers look at it, like, Oh this is just another thing I have to do. But being shown one of these modules, seeing how the standards are incorporated, and then talking with people who were originally involved, I decided to opt in and see what it was all about.

The modules really immerse students in literacy skills – and help them use these skills to become better readers and better writers. Our kids were a little uncomfortable with it at first. They weren't used to being so immersed; they hadn't really had a lot of exposure to that kind of rigor before.

I was a little surprised too, because I thought the students would be better writers than they are. When you give students a topic and let them research it, a lot of teachers take it for granted that they're able to pull out the important pieces of information, that they can organize that information, that they can write a well-structured paper. But I found that a lot of kids – even some of my higher-level kids – were weak in those areas. They really needed to be guided every step of the way.

This has definitely made me more aware of incorporating literacy skills into my general instruction. Just because you're a science teacher doesn't mean you just teach science content; you should really be incorporating other skills. I think I used to take for granted



that kids understood this word or were able to define that word. I don't make those assumptions any more. If there's a word that's kind of questionable, we'll take the 10 seconds and talk about it so that kids are aware of it. I think that makes a big difference. That rigor really needs to be there. If the bar's not set high for the kids and they're not asked to rise to it, their writing's not going to improve, and I think they're not going to improve as students. And you need to be a good writer; that's how you function in society. I get so many emails and letters with misspelled words and incomplete sentences; it's really depressing. So unless we put some measures in place to hold kids more responsible, they're just going to continue

doing what they're doing. And there's no better way to hold them accountable than to teach how to write properly, and then have them just write.

So while it is time consuming to put the modules together and read their five-paragraph essays, I think it's helping kids across the board – learning-support kids, high-level kids, all kids – learn more. And when you figure out a way to blend these tools with your content instruction, it kind of becomes second nature. Then it's really not at all just 'another thing' that's introduced to teachers; it's a more effective way of doing what you have always done.

## Quotes from Sean Houseknecht's Students

### Jenna Snyder

*"I wrote a whole research paper on biodiversity in science, when last year in science almost all of the work was from a textbook. This year I had to use at least three different articles, highlight what was most important, take notes, and organize all the information before writing the essay. I had guidelines for writing the rough draft, and then we did peer editing. My teacher also helped me improve the final draft. I had written about things I was learning before, but now my sentences had to elaborate on the information. I needed a stronger introduction that made a thesis statement and a strong conclusion. I'm sure I will do good in science next year because the research and writing this year helped me to understand the science better."*

### James Moyer

*"We mostly use textbooks for homework this year, while in class we focus on answering key questions about a topic in an informational packet. The writing we do is a lot more than just filling out answers on a sheet of paper. We've done several projects where we have had to do research on the internet and use a bibliography and citations. For an essay on biodiversity, my teacher was giving me feedback on all the drafts. I learned a lot this year in science about how to set up a topic and give supporting details. This helped me learn the content better and apply the knowledge, and the skills have been useful, too, in communication arts. I want to go into the technology or engineering fields, and I think good organizing and writing skills will help me make better presentations about my work."*

## CHAPTER 3:

# Building Instructional Modules

*“The planning and collaboration among teachers that happens in the development of a module creates a difference between good instruction and great instruction.”*

– LDC Lead, Lebanon, Pennsylvania

Having tasks that connect the CCSS to what students are asked to do is only the beginning. The tasks need to be taught. The LDC module system moves educators from thinking about designing quality teaching tasks – the large piece of work that students are asked to do – to thinking about how students will accomplish the task.

Once again, there are key questions educators need to consider, following the initial all-important “what task?” question: What skills do students need to accomplish the task? What instructional experiences will students need to do to develop those skills, and what do teachers need to do to teach students the skills? How do we know what success on the task looks like?

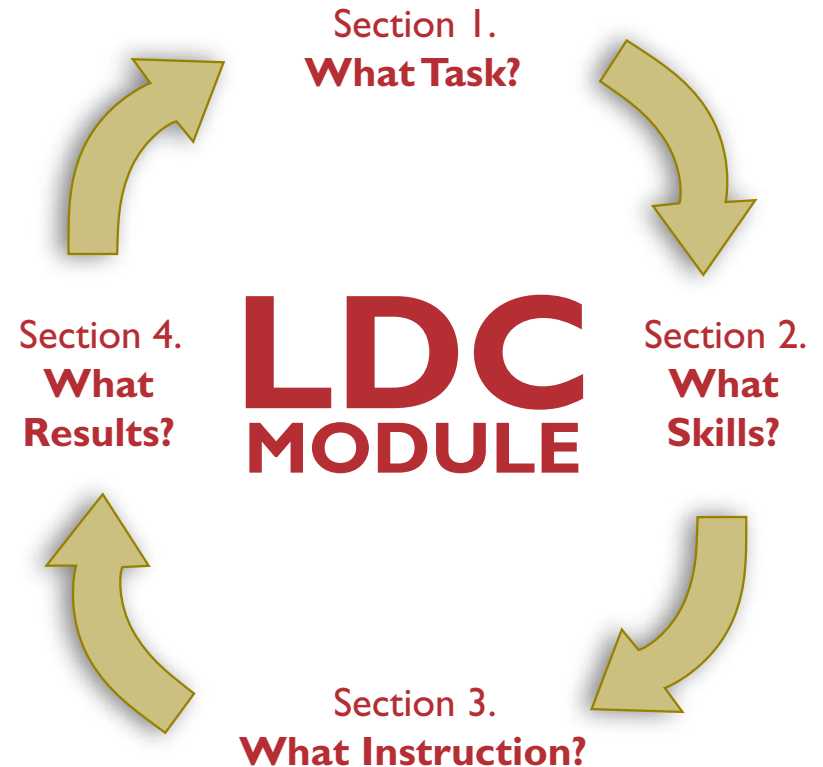
All together, in LDC short-hand, we refer to the LDC module as a series of four key steps:

- What Task?
- What Skills?
- What Instruction?
- What Results?

These four sections, built step-by-step, make up a complete LDC module.

In essence, an LDC module is a comprehensive literacy plan – starting from a teaching task and ending with a student product – that teachers teach over approximately a 2-4 week period. Sample modules are included in the appendix, and we suggest you take a look at them. As you read through this chapter, you may want to refer to the actual modules to help make sense of the explanations.

The LDC system supports teachers in building their own modules based on a single LDC task they design. The elements of the module tools



ensure that the reading, writing, and thinking skills students need to successfully complete the task are intentionally taught and are deeply connected to selected content.

In this chapter, we will build on “What Task?,” or the teaching task design from Chapter 2, and explore the LDC module tools and what is involved in designing an LDC module that wraps around the teaching task.

The common elements of the module create a common language and “feel” that allows for collaborating and sharing among colleagues from classroom to classroom, school to school and state to state. This consistency also allows researchers to study the LDC design.

Completed modules, produced by LDC partners such as the National Writing Project, the National Paideia Center, New Visions for Public Schools and others, will be available for sharing in the LDC web-based materials as partners develop finished modules. Together, this larger collection will offer a wide array of solid instructional strategies and styles that teachers can use as is or adapt.

## Ldc words to design by

**Module:** A 2-4 week plan for teaching literacy using an LDC task that is based on the CCSS, connects reading and writing experiences and addresses a content area theme or issue.

**Teaching Task (a reminder from Chapter 2):** A “completed” LDC template task in which practitioners include the content/issue to be addressed, specify the text they will teach and identify the product to be produced.

**Skill List:** The specific skills that students need to have – or need to be taught – in order to successfully address the teaching task.

**Mini-tasks:** Small, scorable assignments that address each of the skills on the skills list.

**Instructional ladder:** The “lesson plan” that pulls together skills, mini-tasks, and instructional strategies into a coherent, implementation-ready plan for teachers.

**Results:** the proficiency level(s) of student work exhibited on the teaching task.

**Classroom Assessment:** An option to use the template tasks to create assessments to measure student skills exhibited when asked to do a task independently.







## Step 1: What Task? The LDC Teaching Task

Designing a high quality teaching task is a most important first step in building a quality module. Once you have created a strong task, you have completed the first of four steps in creating a module, and you are well on your way to success. For details, see Chapter 2.

## Step 2: What Skills? The LDC Skills List

After teachers design a teaching task, the LDC system asks them to define the multiple, discreet skills students need in order to successfully complete the task. This is the LDC Skills List. It will drive the instructional decisions and experiences students will need as they work toward successfully completing the task.

Take a look at the LDC prototype skills list on the adjacent page.

Notice the general elements of the list:

- Skill name which identifies the reading and writing skills students must acquire to succeed on the teaching task.
- Skill definition starting with the “the ability to ...” so the meaning of each skill a student must have is clear.
- Skill cluster to show the groupings of the skills that make sense for how the teacher will teach them.

For the skills list, teachers must include each of the above three elements – skill name, skill definition, skill clusters. However, which literacy skills, definition and clusters they use is up to them. Select all the skills listed in an LDC prototype, add or excise some of the listed skills, select the definition or clusters “as-is” or create your own new list! Just remember: the skills should come directly from reading, writing, thinking and content skills that are specifically demanded by the task.

### perspectives

*“I learned to be very specific in the scaffolding of skills because my students represent a wide range of reading and writing abilities. The module has to work for all levels, including English-language learners. Specifically, I put in supports for lower-level students and options for students who needed more of a challenge. True, you can’t teach all the skills students need in a short amount of time, so you have to scaffold the literacy skills and focus on those that are most important to get to at the end point in three weeks. But remember that the module is not going to be successful if it reaches only 30 percent of the class.”*

High school social studies teacher,  
Oregon

## LDC Skills List Example

Specific Skills <i>What skills are essential?</i>	Skills Defined (“Ability to ...”) <i>How do you define/describe those skills?</i>
<b>Skills Cluster 1: Preparing for the task</b>	
1. Bridging Conversation	Ability to connect the task and new content to existing knowledge, skills, experiences, interests, and concerns.
2. Task analysis	Ability to understand and explain the task’s prompt and rubric.
3. Project planning	Ability to plan so that the task is accomplished on time.
<b>Skills Cluster 2: Reading process</b>	
1. Reading “habits of mind”	Ability to select appropriate texts and understand necessary reading strategies needed for the task.
2. Essential Vocabulary	Ability to apply strategies for developing an understanding of a text(s) by locating words and phrases that identify key concepts and facts, or information.
3. Note-taking	Ability to read purposefully and select relevant information; to summarize and/or paraphrase.
4. Organizing Notes	Ability to prioritize and narrow supporting information.
<b>Skills Cluster 3: Transition to writing</b>	
1. Bridging Conversation	Ability to transition from reading or researching phase to the writing phase.
<b>Skills Cluster 4: Writing process</b>	
1. Initiation of Task	Ability to establish a controlling idea and consolidate information relevant to task.
2. Planning	Ability to develop a line of thought and text structure appropriate to an informational or explanatory task.
3. Development	Ability to construct an initial draft with an emerging line of thought and structure.
4. Revision	Ability to apply revision strategies to refine development of information or explanation, including line of thought, language usage, and tone as appropriate to audience and purpose.

## Step 3: What Instruction? The LDC Instructional Ladder

The LDC system starts with designing a teaching task. But it is the Instructional Ladder that supports teachers in putting their “teaching” into the task. It is the difference between assigning a task and teaching a task.

The instructional ladder is named such because it asks teachers to outline step-by-step what students will do – and what teachers will teach – to achieve the larger teaching task.

Here is a closer look at the instructional ladder:

### 1. Teachers start with the skills list/clusters.

The instructional ladder is organized around the skills list. Each skill has to be taught.

### 2. Teachers design a “mini-task” for each skill.

The first step in designing instruction to teach each of the skills from the skills list is creating a series of “mini-tasks.” A mini-task is a small or short assignment (a few class periods, sometimes only one) that engages students in learning each of the skills necessary to complete the tasks.

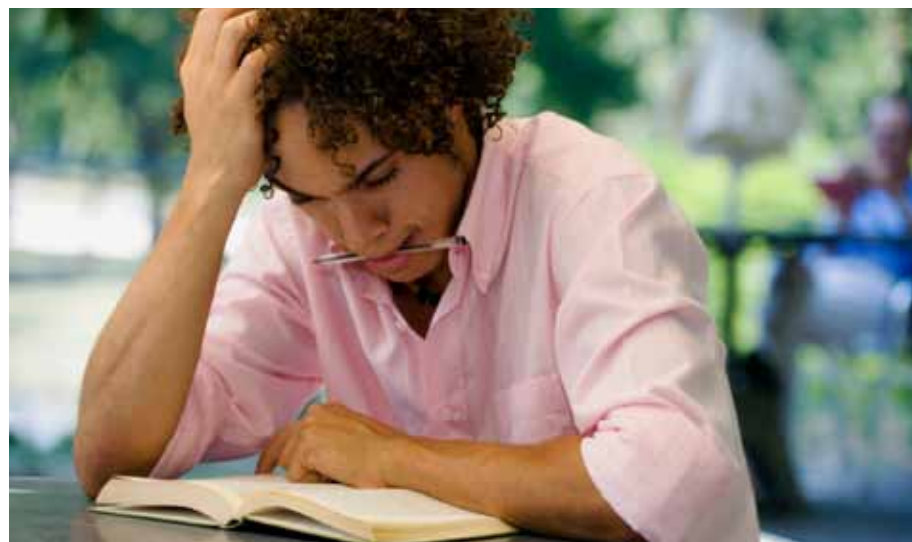
The core elements that make up each distinct mini-task.

- Prompt that addresses students and asks them to practice and demonstrate an “in-progress” skill.
- Product that students will produce that can be evaluated for success on the skill being taught.
- Scoring guide with stated criteria for what students will be expected to show as evidence of learning, typically a quick “yes/no” reference.

### perspectives

*“This project has questioned a lot of the assumptions we had about what ‘good’ is. We are learning that content teachers don’t know how to support students in the writing process, so they have to analyze their instruction. They are realizing that good teaching is more than giving assignments. They have to teach the reading and writing skills directly.”*

LDC project lead,  
Pennsylvania



### Mini-Task on controlling idea, as part of argumentation teaching task

Prompt:	Product:	Scoring Guide:
Write a draft claim in one-three sentences. (This claim can be modified as you develop your ideas.)	Draft claim, 1-3 sentences	<p>“Yes” – Writes a credible claim based on task and unit.</p> <p>“No” – Fails to writes a credible claim based on task and unit.</p>

Notice that the mini-tasks – and their elements – are grouped together based on the example Skills List clustering. This makes for seamless alignment between what skills are needed, what students do to develop those skills and what teachers teach. The trick is to watch out for doing an “activity for activity’s sake.” Instead, all of the mini-tasks – individually and grouped – should be purposeful, intentional and strategic to lead students to completing the larger teaching task.

### 3. Teachers add instructional strategies and pacing to complete the instructional ladder.

Once teachers have listed skills and developed mini-tasks, they are ready to complete the instructional ladder. This includes:

- Instructional strategies which outline what the teacher will do to teach the skill – both before and after students address the prompt and complete a product
- Pacing the anticipated or suggested amount of class time for the mini-task, which could also be when the mini-task will occur in relation to the other mini-tasks (e.g., day 1, day 2)

While this process may seem daunting, there is a “fast-break” strategy that speeds things up for teachers: the “module template.” A module template is an almost completed module that teachers can use as is, can adapt to fit their own instructional choices, or can choose to ignore if they want to develop their own template from scratch. The advantage of the module template is that it is almost done, and modules can be developed very quickly. This is particularly true once individual teachers or groups have spent time up front developing a quality module template or a small collection of templates.

LDC is developing a set of juried, well-tested template modules that teachers can use to build their modules. Over time, we expect the collection to improve in quality and range of choices, as partners work to improve instruction in their classrooms and the LDC module

Ldc prototypes – adopt, adapt or create your own!

For each module section, the LDC system offers prototypes (or examples) that teachers can select to use no matter which subjects, grade levels or tasks they are teaching. These require minimal additional work by teachers and are designed to save teachers time. Teachers can also adapt or revise the LDC prototypes, borrow from modules created by LDC partners and colleagues – or just create their own. It’s their choice!



format “captures” the expertise that emerges. There are currently a number of prototypes available to use, adapt/revise or ignore to create a new one. Anyone can design a new module template: the LDC elements are required – but teachers can identify their own specific skills, design their own mini-tasks, and group the skills/mini-tasks into clusters as they see fit as a way to customize the work to meet the needs of their students!



## perspectives

*“I had to really work with the students on supporting their opinions with specific evidence. Many students had powerful feelings about the literature, both positive and negative. They were quick to offer their opinion, but they had trouble supporting that opinion with clear and concise evidence. I revised some of the timeline for the module because often the process takes longer than expected. I also needed to address some issues they had with research. I had to do some more leg work with the students, for example, on using and citing direct quotes and paraphrasing.*

*In the end, I was not really surprised at the high quality of the student work. When teachers and students put the necessary time and effort into the writing process, the results are powerful.*

*My suggestion to other teachers is to start the process in a small way. Sometimes the process can be daunting, and trying to overhaul what is happening in the classroom in one swoop could be overwhelming. The best way to go is to build up gradually toward using the modules in a full-blown way.”*

Rachel Hanson

## Step 4: What Results? Scoring LDC Student Work

Some of the most pressing and frequently asked questions about the LDC system relate to the results for students. How do we know if students have successfully addressed the teaching task? How do we know if students have further developed their reading and writing skills in order to successfully address a similar task independently?

The student work produced in response to the teaching task is the greatest evidence of student learning. To be considered final and “shareable” with others, the LDC module requires at least two examples of student work for each performance level of the LDC rubric to be included. The challenge, of course, is reaching agreement about what is advanced, proficient or not acceptable.

The LDC rubric is the first step in articulating the criteria for each level of performance. Benchmarked papers and common scoring systems are the next, critically important steps in making the language and expectations of the LDC rubric concrete and shared across classrooms, schools, districts and now even states.

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has extended the LDC partnership to include expert scoring partners who are taking the lead in this area. They are designing a scoring system, developing training processes and materials, working with LDC partners to score with consistency across sites and benchmarking student papers as exemplars for reference. Forthcoming in the next year, their work will put the final pieces of the LDC system in place to allow for wide use and sharing of LDC modules and student work.

In the meantime, LDC partners are embracing common scoring of taught student work using LDC rubrics at the local level. There is no

doubt that it is a powerful strategy to start the building of a locally shared meaning of “achievement” while the cross-state work rolls out. As teachers gain more confidence in their scoring, the student scores gain more and more meaning and accuracy.

There is a second option for producing student work: the optional classroom assessment task. A classroom assessment task can be designed and used by teachers to see how well students perform independently on an LDC task. It can be used as a pre-test as well as a post-test. Teachers design these assessment tasks using the same “fill-in-the-blank” template task that they used for their teaching task. However, there are key adjustments: students complete the task on their own in one or two sittings; reading materials, student products and content changes are made to adapt to the shorter student work time; and a customized rubric is used to assess student work (See Template Task collection) .

Scoring student work provides critical classroom-based data to inform the next steps teachers and students must take to improve literacy skills through subsequent modules they will teach and do.



## scoring at its best

There is no need to wait to kick off local scoring efforts. Here are a few key attributes of an effective scoring process:

- Collecting and identifying student work using some notation system that identifies student grade levels and class, but not individual students.
- Scoring in pairs or small groups in which differences in scores are discussed.
- Agreeing on and providing one score. Teachers might note on the rubric where there are weaknesses and strengths or where students need to work more diligently; the notation would be used to confer with students.
- Collecting scores in a matrix to identify how many scores are at each level. Teams should discuss what the classroom, student groups and individual student data indicate about learning progress and what students need next. For example, the discussion can ask:
  - Do students need to repeat the task, with other texts and content?
  - Are they ready to move to a higher Level 2 or 3?
  - Are they ready to move to another type of module? Do they need some interim teaching on specific skills before they engage in another module?
- Selecting a small number of papers that pose interesting questions for instruction.
- Collecting sample papers to serve as exemplars for future scoring.

## The LDC Module: Putting It All Together

Take a look at the sample modules in the appendix. They provide an example of an LDC module in its entirety. In the examples, you will see the last few parts of the module. These elements facilitate sharing among teachers and act as reminders for teachers when they revise their own modules to use with different students, different years or at different points in a course.

- **Information sheet** – provides an overview and contact information for sharing with others.
- **Materials, References, Supports** – part of the “What Instruction?” section. This page asks teachers to cite the specific materials they use and students use as part of the module.
- **Teacher Work Section** – an optional section that includes a page for teacher reflection after a module is taught, notes on how they would alter the module for different students, and other information for colleagues, as well as an appendix where teachers can contribute materials they developed to support their instruction and student learning.

These final pieces – along with the developed teaching task, skills list, instructional ladder, rubric and student work examples – constitute a completed LDC module. In the examples, notice how these LDC design elements hold steady across modules, even despite different formatting techniques. At the same time, notice how teachers have customized their modules by contributing their content knowledge, pedagogical expertise and understanding of their students to the task, skills list and instructional ladder they designed using the LDC framework.

The following chart outlines the technical specifications for the LDC modules: what elements are required by the design and what can be customized by educators.

### perspectives

*“Typically, writing with freshmen, especially analysis, is like pulling teeth and miserable for everyone involved. Using the module, the students felt ownership from the beginning. I was skeptical about the first mini-task, asking the students for confusing words, but it was by far the most rewarding piece of the module for me. Several students were very worried about the word ‘analytical’ and never would have said anything, but because I asked for confusing words specifically, they were able to articulate before we even started writing. Student misconceptions were cleared up immediately, and when we finally got to development they felt like they were experts.”*

Pre-AP high school English teacher,  
Kentucky

## LDC Module Requirements and Options

SECTION	WHAT IS REQUIRED?	WHAT CAN BE CHANGED OR ADDED?
<b>Beginning Information</b>		
Information Sheet	<p>Show key information to identify the module:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Title and brief description.</li> <li>■ Teaching task and template task used to create it.</li> <li>■ Author and author's contact information.</li> <li>■ Discipline, course, and grade level.</li> </ul>	
<b>Section 1: What Task?</b>		
Standards	<p>List the exact Common Core State Standards for the template task.</p> <p>Add appropriate state content standards.</p> <p>Provide source information for the standards you use.</p>	You can also include appropriate grade-level Common Core State Standards.
Teaching Task	<p>Fill in the template task, completing all the blanks but not altering the other template wording.</p> <p>List the reading texts for the prompt or describe how students will be guided to select appropriate texts.</p> <p>Provide a background statement that introduces the prompt to students.</p> <p>If an extension activity is included, provide an activity in which students share or apply what they have learned with a real-world audience or through a hands-on project. (The extension may also be omitted.)</p> <p>Use the exact rubric for the template task.</p>	<p>You choose which texts students will read, the content they will study, and the writing product they will create. In choosing, consider requirements set by your state, district, or school.</p> <p>You decide whether to include the Level 2 and Level 3 portions of the template task and whether to include extension sections.</p>
<b>Section 2: What Skills?</b>		
Specific skills	List the skills students need to succeed on the teaching task.	You can create your own list of skills by back-mapping from the template task, or you can use or adapt a model skills chart.
Skills defined	Define each skill listed using the stem "the ability to ..."	You choose the definitions.
Skills clusters	Cluster the skills in groupings that make sense and are in a workable order for teaching.	You decide the groupings.

SECTION	WHAT IS REQUIRED?	WHAT CAN BE CHANGED OR ADDED?
<b>Section 3: What Instruction?</b>		
Mini-tasks	<p>For each identified skill, provide a prompt that asks students to apply an “in-progress” skill or practice.</p> <p>Identify the product students will produce in response to each prompt.</p> <p>Include a short scoring guide for all or most student products.</p>	<p>You can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Use a model set of mini-tasks developed by the LDC design team, your state or district, or some other partner.</li> <li>■ Adapt one of those models to fit your teaching task.</li> <li>■ Develop your own.</li> </ul>
Instructional strategies	Specify the instructional strategies to be used in teaching students to succeed on each mini-task.	You can decide what instructional strategies to use, within any requirements set by your state, district, or school. You can also use or adapt a model developed by the LDC design team or another group.
Pacing plans	Estimate time requirements for each mini-task.	You decide what time will be needed for each step.
Materials, references, and supports	<p>List the materials, references, and supports students and teachers will need to complete the instruction.</p> <p>Provide internet or other source information for published documents, and use the appendix to provide copies of other materials.</p>	You decide what items will be needed or helpful.
<b>Section 4: What Results?</b>		
Student work samples	Include two student work samples that received scores at each level on the rubric that goes with the template task.	You choose the work samples.
Classroom assessment task	If a classroom assessment is included, use the same template task as the teaching task and include the applicable classroom assessment rubric. (The classroom assessment may also be omitted.)	You can use the “plug and play” aspects of the template task – the academic content, reading texts, and writing expectations – to create a shorter task for students to complete in one or two sittings without coaching.
<b>Supporting Information</b>		
Teacher thoughts	(This section may be left blank.)	You may include notes that will be helpful to other teachers using this module.
Appendix	Include copies of any materials that are not otherwise easily available.	

## check list: what makes a 'great' module?

A quality module will:

- Follow the LDC requirements listed in the technical specifications for LDC Modules.
- Be built around a great teaching task (as defined in Chapter 2).
- List, define, and cluster the skills students need for the teaching task so that other teachers quickly understand how they work (or add notes to explain).
- Provide doable mini-tasks that build important literacy practices in reading, writing, and critical thinking and support student success on the full teaching task.
- Establish two-point scoring guides (meets expectations/not yet) for all or nearly all mini-tasks, designed to provide quick, clear feedback that allows students to move on with confidence or correct any problems.
- Provide clear, brief instructional strategies that other teachers can quickly understand (or adds notes to explain).
- Show how the task can be paced for completion in two to four weeks for a stand-alone module (longer for a module extended into a unit).
- Share materials, references, and supports that can help other teacher and their students be successful with the teaching task and mini-tasks, including information that makes those items easy to find and use.
- Include sample student pieces that are easily recognizable as work from the intended grade level.
- Include a classroom assessment task that is relevant to the curriculum and the content standards for the module; invites students to apply their reading, writing, and thinking skills fully; and is doable in 1-2 days without teacher coaching.

Finally, the particular module that is being designed should sit within a broader instructional strategy. The decisions that are made can intentionally scaffold reading and writing instruction in one classroom over the course of the year, across subject areas during the year and even across grade levels. In other words, the choice points in one teaching task and module – when combined with the teaching of other LDC tasks – should contribute to overall

instructional coherence for students to intentionally improve their reading and writing skills over time.



## Teacher Profile

*Holly Particelli, 8th Grade Science  
Elizabethtown Area Middle School*

The common core standards are still very new to me, so trying out [these new tools] made me pretty nervous at first. I was thinking, How am I going to teach all of my science curriculum and also add this in? Especially since we get tested in 8th grade for PSSA Science Tests. But I want my students to be well equipped for whatever they do. I learned that a lot of college, and even high school, teachers complain that students don't know how to read science texts, how to take notes. I'm thinking: Wow, I've never spent time teaching that. As a science teacher, I just figured they knew how to do it. All this time I'm just expecting it – but I need to teach it. That was a big revelation for me.

It has required more time, and I'm a little behind in my curriculum now; when you teach something for the first time, it always takes longer than if you're an expert at it. But next year will be a lot easier. And I think it's very beneficial for the students – especially when they see their work at the end, things I don't think they thought that they could do. I have a mix of students, and I have seen every different type of student be successful with this.

For example, the common core standards say students should be able to write a multi-paragraph [science] essay. I've always had students write – but never essays. It seemed like a huge task. And when I found out that the students should cite evidence within their writing, I thought, How am I going to do this? I felt inadequate. But someone from our intermediate unit who had already taught this module showed us the materials that she used with students. So I



kind of mimicked my work off of that. The reading specialist here has helped me tremendously. She teaches certain skills to my first class of the day, and then I model that the rest of the day for my other classes. There are different template tasks written for you, and you just fill in the words. They actually have different levels you can take it to.

I think these tools have changed the way I teach. Because when you're teaching for 21 years – I can't believe when I say that – you get sort of set in what you want done. Even your expectations. And I think that this approach has allowed me to raise expectations of

students – and I’ve seen them meet those expectations. You know, because did I think that they could write good multi-paragraph essays? Probably not. So I shortchanged them. Teachers sometimes tend to think, “Well, I don’t think they can do that,” instead of pushing students. So it was good for me to see that. It’s enabled me to push the students, and it’s shown me that they can do it.

## Quotes from Holly Particelli’s Students

### **Karlee Grudi**

*“At first I thought it was strange to do so much writing in science, but then I decided it was cool. I had never written anything argumentative before, but we had to take a stand on the subject of cryobiology, or preserving tissues for future use. We read four or five articles on both sides of the argument and took notes from them, then developed a thesis and wrote five paragraphs on it. I learned the topic a lot better than if I had just used the textbook because we first had to do research and take notes, then think about what we learned. Then we wrote about it and did a rewrite, so I did lots of review of the information. This definitely prepared me for high school because I know there will be more of this kind of writing in my classes there.”*

### **Muzahidul “Muzzy” Islam**

*“The reading we did on cryobiology was the most I have ever done on just one topic. Reading the articles was a lot more fun than working from a textbook because we had to compare ideas and think about what was important, which we don’t do with a textbook. Last year we didn’t write any essays in science. We just had a prompt and wrote short answers to it. I know that I have learned to write a lot better this year like being able to use descriptions and transitions. I came here from Bangladesh about five years ago not knowing any English, and I have not always enjoyed writing in my classes, but I am getting a lot of help, and now I think it is much more fun. I have used this internet program (Oasis) that tells me what level I am at in reading and writing, and I have found out that I am prepared for high school work. I plan to study technology, and I know that being able to do research and use good writing skills will help me when I need to prepare reports and such.”*

## CHAPTER 4:

# Building Out from Modules

*“A course leverages each module to create a synergy that supports students in their efforts to become increasingly independent and confident learners.”*

– Eleanor Dougherty, LDC

The LDC module presents a variety of design opportunities for building a system that ensures students receive instruction in reading and writing over time. LDC suggests three ways to think about using modules in a larger system:

- Content units with embedded modules
- Modules linked in strategic sequences
- Modules built into literacy-saturated courses

### Content Units with Embedded Modules

Many teachers and schools build their curriculum maps from “units,” planned blocks of instruction that focus on specific content and involve students in activities, assignments and sometimes assessments. Because units often introduce students to new knowledge and skills, units require substantial teaching about the topic, issue, or theme to enable students to acquire understanding.

Teachers, individually or as a group, can insert an LDC module at a point in a unit when they decide students are prepared enough to examine in depth its critical elements – a question, an issue, a topic. Used this way, a module works to further engage students in the content and its complexities through the teaching of reading and writing about it. If teachers wish, they can give students a classroom assessment at the end of the unit that parallels the teaching task in the module.

### perspectives

*“LDC is almost a relief because I feel like I can take a module and have it fit beautifully with the content of high school studies. We had exciting debates, for example, for an argumentative model that asked students if the picture of Andrew Jackson deserved to be on the \$20 bill. Student writing is much better than before because now they see it has a purpose and isn’t a random assignment. Having to do research and analysis is a huge step forward for them.”*

11th Grade U.S. History teacher,  
Kentucky

## Modules Linked in Strategic Sequences

Modules should not be designed or taught as a “one shot” deal but should be connected, or “linked,” to spiral the reading and writing skills to be taught across time. This can be done in multiple ways:

### *Sequence modules within content areas.*

By sequencing a type of module over a term or semester with different topics and reading materials within a discipline or course, students have multiple opportunities to learn. For example, social studies teachers might teach two argumentation modules during the first semester, using either the same template task or different ones. They could design the two so that the level of difficulty (whether text complexity, product or content) increases for the second module while also scaffolding instruction based on data from student mini-tasks and the final product from the first module. Social studies teachers could repeat this approach to sequencing modules in the second semester by using informational or explanatory modules.

### *Sequence modules across content areas.*

By sequencing a type of module horizontally over content areas, students not only have multiple opportunities to hone their reading and writing skills, they also can apply those skills in different contexts. For example, a social studies teacher might teach an argumentation module the first term while an English teacher teaches the same type the second term. To create even more variety, the sequence might include some of the elective areas such as music or sports. This approach forces distribution of responsibility for teaching reading and writing across the school, one of the principles in the CCSS. And, it creates a common focus across content areas that sets expectations for student learning, provides feedback on student learning for teachers with the same students and allows for the sharing of instructional strategies.

### *Teach Common Modules across Grades, Schools, Districts, or States*

LDC modules also can be orchestrated vertically across grades to create coherence for students in their learning of reading and writing skills over much longer periods of time – say 9-12 grades or even 6-12 grades. Moreover, modules can be taught across schools or districts – maybe even states. In this approach, when teachers share the challenge of teaching a module, they share expertise and build capacity. They score together and in the process build consensus about the expectations they are setting, how the rubrics reflect those expectations and what students should be expected to do at a grade level and over multiple grade levels no matter their school, district or state. The module, in essence, transforms the CCSS into practice that is meaningful and thoughtful.

## Modules Built into Literacy-saturated Courses

The LDC course-taking design seeks a highly consistent overall curriculum experience in reading and writing, one in which both students and teachers are learners in their own ways. It seeks to ensure that a wide range of formative data and feedback on student literacy development gathered over time will inform not only instructional choices but also school and district policies and resources. Strategies might include:

### ***Content-area courses***

The most powerful way to ensure that students receive rigorous instruction in the CCSS for reading and writing is to design a literacy-saturated ELA, social studies or science course. This course is based on a systematic distribution of modules for a subject area at a grade level. The sequencing design might include: 1) sequencing modules by topic or chronology depending on the subject, and 2) sequencing modules by rigor level of the LDC selected tasks, such as taking students from L1 to L3 using the same task template or by moving from simpler to more complex texts.

### ***Literacy courses***

In addition to designing courses within content areas, partners may choose other types of LDC courses. For example, designers might choose to create a literacy course separate from ELA consisting of modules sequenced by type and skill sets, much in the way colleges design English composition courses for first year students. In this design, literature could continue to be taught as a discipline while the Literacy Course teaches reading and writing skills that support learning in all subject areas.

### ***Integrated courses***

There are many different ways to integrate courses. For example, a team of teachers might design and teach a Humanities course – involving history, philosophy, science, literature, and the arts – that uses the LDC template tasks to integrate the content from different disciplines while teaching reading and writing skills. Depending on the requirements related to “seat time” and flexibility that allows creative scheduling, students could receive both English and social studies credit by taking the Humanities course.

### ***Sequenced courses***

Designing modules to create the “big picture” involves placing modules over several years within a course sequence. In this way, a middle school, for example, can ensure that over three years all students receive intentional instruction in reading and writing and master those skills over time. This approach requires careful planning and collaboration but offers the most powerful way to develop and “ground” literacy practices not only in students’ repertoire but also in teachers’ range of instructional skills.

Ultimately, this list will expand and provide further examples as LDC partners learn and share what they are creating.

In addition, efforts are underway on a number of fronts to develop “credit-by-proficiency” applications of LDC, where larger more complex assignments and collections of student work can be used to award credit based on student success. Credit-by-proficiency measures offer interesting options for measuring student success on the types of complex assignments they will face when they enter college. The possibilities in this work are just beginning and combined with assessments, it could truly prepare students to successfully meet common core demands in the broadest sense.



## perspectives

*The purpose of the initiative is to have the students understand that they are reading and writing not just in my class, but in all their classes and it is the same structures – the same requirements – that they are held to the same standard.*

Teacher



## CHAPTER 5: The Challenge

The success of the LDC strategy in its pilot year exceeded expectations. After experience with developing only one module, researchers reported at the mid-year of the pilot that more than 90% of the teachers surveyed believed the LDC work was a good fit for their curriculum. More than 80% believed it was a good fit for their students. Collaboration among teachers on student learning issues increased at every site.

The pilot year began with teaching templates and modules prepared by the LDC team as prototypes. Within a few months, teachers were contributing their own modules to an online resource available to all teachers. Sites experimented with different ways of providing professional development such as coaches in every school and looking at student work together using common standards. They also often found that librarians should be part of the LDC team because teachers needed help finding reading materials that were both appropriate for the core standards and at accessible levels for their students.

The ongoing research of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation at the LDC sites, combined with the expertise being developed, will provide the base for the second phase of the pilot work in the school year 2011-12. This will see expansion of the LDC strategy within schools and districts and into state networks. The potential of the modules to strengthen literacy instruction in a number of ways will be explored. At the same time, the basic LDC strategy will continue to evolve as teachers and literacy experts help it address more differentiated needs of students and integrate technology tools.

The most encouraging result of the LDC strategy so far, however, shows in the engagement of students. The college-prep essay no longer seems like an impossible mountain to climb!

### perspectives

*“This is about the kids and what they can do, not about what we as teachers think they need. Looking at student work is the critical piece. Their work tells you their story. And we have learned to trust our students a lot more.”*

Project lead,  
Hillsborough (FL) County Schools

## Teacher Profile

Monica Cressman, Reading Specialist  
Elizabethtown Area Middle School

*When our communications arts department first saw the common core standards, we were collectively like: Thank God. I mean, this is what our kids need. You know in your heart as an English teacher what is good practice, but [standardized] testing has really limited our teaching and our curriculum.. So it's been very helpful for me to understand, through my experience with LDC, how the common core relates to our curriculum: what we do well already, and where we need to go.*

*When we were first introduced to the concept of building a module though, it was very, very overwhelming, even for me, with a literacy background – until we got in and actually started using the tools. The framework forces you to start with the end in mind, looking at the big picture first, which is an excellent way to teach. Then you design your instructional ladder, your reading and your writing activities. I'm an interventionist as well, and one of the things that LDC has also made me realize is that just because a student is an at-risk reader doesn't mean that we let them out of doing things. We still need to have that rigor there for them; we just need to put the scaffolds in place to help them reach it.*

*Co-teaching the modules this year, especially with the science teachers, has been a real revelation. The science teachers really are getting the kids to incorporate reading and writing strategies in their research essays. And they're doing that with more rigor than even some of our communication arts teachers. I'm just blown away by the level of commitment that I've seen – but it's because teachers are really seeing the value in these tools. Using this framework leads your students to be more critical thinkers*



*I look at this as a way to help students effectively understand my curriculum. If they can read about it, take notes, make sense of it, synthesize it, write about it effectively, then you know they've gotten it. You are going to have to read more papers, and it takes a lot of time to do that. But I think if your students get used to that process, then you're not going to have to spend as much time on it as we have initially. We've already seen growth. My seventh grade at-risk readers have done two modules, and I saw huge, huge leaps from the first to the second one.*

*As a teacher, you care about the kids; you want them to know and understand things, to be critical thinkers. The best way to help teachers see that these tools are really worthwhile is to show them good examples of what students in our district have written and ask, "Could a student in your class do this?"*



# **APPENDIX: Sample Modules**



## **Sample Module 1: Comparing Economic Systems**



## Information Sheet

Module overview:	Every society operates with a mixed economic system, combining the influences of market and command models in order to form a functioning economy and government. Individual countries have unique combinations of the market and command influences depending on how countries prioritize different economic goals. Students will learn the characteristics of the market and command systems and evaluate the benefits and consequences of each system.
Template task (include number, type, level):	Task 2. SS Argumentation/Analysis L1, 2. [Insert question] After reading _____ (literature or informational texts), write _____ (essay or substitute) that addresses the question and support your position with evidence from the text(s). L2 Be sure to acknowledge competing views. L3 Give examples from past or current events or issues to illustrate and clarify your position.
Teaching task:	What combination of market and command systems do you believe creates an ideal mixed economy? After reading informational and opinion texts, write an essay that addresses the question and support your position with evidence from the texts. Be sure to acknowledge competing views.
Grade(s)/Level:	11/12
Discipline:	Social Studies
Course:	Economics
Author(s):	Kathy Thiebes
Contact information:	Social Studies Teacher, Centennial High School, Gresham, OR School Email: Kathy_thiebes@centennial.k12.or.us, Personal Email: kthiebes@gmail.com

## Section 1: What Task?

### TEACHING TASK

Background to share with students:	Every society operates with a mixed economic system, combining the influences of market and command models in order to form a functioning economy and government. Individual countries have unique combinations of the market and command influences depending on how countries prioritize different economic goals.
Teaching task:	What combination of market and command systems do you believe creates an ideal mixed economy? After reading informational and opinion texts, write an essay that addresses the question and support your position with evidence from the texts. Be sure to acknowledge competing views.
Extension (optional):	Students participate in a formal class debate about the future of America's economic system using their essays and other research to defend their market and command preferences on different topics (healthcare, welfare, education, taxes, etc.).
Reading texts:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ John Edwards and Edward Tanner, "Should the U.S. have a National Healthcare System?" (Article)</li> <li>■ David Kestenbaum, "Denmark Thrives Despite High Taxes" (Transcript of Broadcast)</li> <li>■ William Booth "As Cuba gives Capitalism a try, Experts Ponder Future" (Article)</li> <li>■ Paul Krugman and John Tierney, "Wal-Mart: Good or Evil" (Article)</li> <li>■ "The World's Best Countries" (<i>interactive infographic</i>)</li> </ul>

### CONTENT STANDARDS FROM STATE OR DISTRICT

Standards Source:	Oregon State Standards - <a href="http://www.ode.state.or.us">http://www.ode.state.or.us</a>
NUMBER	CONTENT STANDARDS
SS.HS.EC.02.01	Compare and contrast the allocation of goods and services in market and command economies.
SS.HS.EC.04	Evaluate different economic systems, comparing advantages and disadvantages of each.

## COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

READING STANDARDS FOR ARGUMENTATION	
“Built-in” Reading Standards	“When Appropriate” Reading Standards
1 – Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.	3 – Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.
2 – Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.	5 – Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
4 – Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.	6 – Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
10 – Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.	7 – Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
	8 – Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.
	9 – Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
WRITING STANDARDS FOR ARGUMENTATION	
“Built-in” Writing Standards	“When Appropriate” Writing Standards
1 – Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.	2 – Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
4 – Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.	3 – Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
5 – Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.	6 – Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.
9 – Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.	7 – Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
10 – Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audience.	8 – Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.

# scoring rubric for argumentation template tasks

Scoring Elements	Not Yet		Approaches Expectations		Meets Expectations		Advanced
	1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5	4
Focus	Attempts to address prompt, but lacks focus or is off-task.		Addresses prompt appropriately and establishes a position, but focus is uneven.		Addresses prompt appropriately and maintains a clear, steady focus. Provides a generally convincing position.		Addresses all aspects of prompt appropriately with a consistently strong focus and convincing position.
Controlling Idea	Attempts to establish a claim, but lacks a clear purpose. (L2) Makes no mention of counter claims.		Establishes a claim. (L2) Makes note of counter claims.		Establishes a credible claim. (L2) Develops claim and counter claims fairly.		Establishes and maintains a substantive and credible claim or proposal. (L2) Develops claims and counter claims fairly and thoroughly.
Reading/ Research	Attempts to reference reading materials to develop response, but lacks connections or relevance to the purpose of the prompt.		Presents information from reading materials relevant to the purpose of the prompt with minor lapses in accuracy or completeness.		Accurately presents details from reading materials relevant to the purpose of the prompt to develop argument or claim.		Accurately and effectively presents important details from reading materials to develop argument or claim.
Development	Attempts to provide details in response to the prompt, but lacks sufficient development or relevance to the purpose of the prompt. (L3) Makes no connections or a connection that is irrelevant to argument or claim.		Presents appropriate details to support and develop the focus, controlling idea, or claim, with minor lapses in the reasoning, examples, or explanations. (L3) Makes a connection with a weak or unclear relationship to argument or claim.		Presents appropriate and sufficient details to support and develop the focus, controlling idea, or claim. (L3) Makes a relevant connection to clarify argument or claim.		Presents thorough and detailed information to effectively support and develop the focus, controlling idea, or claim. (L3) Makes a clarifying connection(s) that illuminates argument and adds depth to reasoning.
Organization	Attempts to organize ideas, but lacks control of structure.		Uses an appropriate organizational structure for development of reasoning and logic, with minor lapses in structure and/or coherence.		Maintains an appropriate organizational structure to address specific requirements of the prompt. Structure reveals the reasoning and logic of the argument.		Maintains an organizational structure that intentionally and effectively enhances the presentation of information as required by the specific prompt. Structure enhances development of the reasoning and logic of the argument.
Conventions	Attempts to demonstrate standard English conventions, but lacks cohesion and control of grammar, usage, and mechanics. Sources are used without citation.		Demonstrates an uneven command of standard English conventions and cohesion. Uses language and tone with some inaccurate, inappropriate, or uneven features. Inconsistently cites sources.		Demonstrates a command of standard English conventions and cohesion, with few errors. Response includes language and tone appropriate to the audience, purpose, and specific requirements of the prompt. Cites sources using appropriate format with only minor errors.		Demonstrates and maintains a well-developed command of standard English conventions and cohesion, with few errors. Response includes language and tone consistently appropriate to the audience, purpose, and specific requirements of the prompt. Consistently cites sources using appropriate format.
Content Understanding	Attempts to include disciplinary content in argument, but understanding of content is weak; content is irrelevant, inappropriate, or inaccurate.		Briefly notes disciplinary content relevant to the prompt; shows basic or uneven understanding of content; minor errors in explanation.		Accurately presents disciplinary content relevant to the prompt with sufficient explanations that demonstrate understanding.		Integrates relevant and accurate disciplinary content with thorough explanations that demonstrate in-depth understanding.



## Section 2: What Skills?

SKILL	DEFINITION
SKILLS CLUSTER 1: PREPARING FOR THE TASK	
Task engagement	Ability to connect the task and new content to existing knowledge, skills, experiences, interests, and concerns.
Task analysis	Ability to understand and explain the task's prompt and rubric.
SKILLS CLUSTER 2: READING PROCESS	
Pre-reading	Ability to select appropriate texts and understand necessary reading strategies needed for the task.
Note-taking	Ability to read purposefully and select relevant information; to summarize and/or paraphrase.
Organizing Notes	Ability to prioritize and narrow notes and other information.
SKILLS CLUSTER 3: TRANSITION TO WRITING	
Bridging conversation	Ability to transition from reading or researching phase to the writing phase.
SKILLS CLUSTER 4: WRITING PROCESS	
Initiation of task	Ability to establish a claim and consolidate information relevant to task.
Planning	Ability to develop a line of thought and text structure appropriate to an argumentation task.
Development	Ability to construct an initial draft with an emerging line of thought and structure.
Revision & editing	Ability to apply revision strategies to refine development of argument, including line of thought, language, tone, and presentation.

## Section 3: What Instruction?

PACING	SKILL AND DEFINITION	MINI-TASK		INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES
		PRODUCT AND PROMPT	SCORING	
SKILLS CLUSTER 1: PREPARING FOR THE TASK				
1 class period	<u>1.Task engagement</u> Ability to connect the task and new content to existing knowledge, skills, experiences, interests, and concerns.	<u>Short Response</u> In a quick write response, what is your first reaction to the task prompt? What strategies did you use to interpret this prompt?	No Scoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ <u>Opener</u> - students will complete an opening journal entry and discussion in order to review the content on economic systems. Example:“What would be the positive and negative effects if America chose to eliminate public schools in favor of an all-private system?”</li><li>■ Students complete the quick-write in their Writer’s Notebook.</li><li>■ <u>Socratic Seminar</u> – After the quick-write, students will engage in a short Socratic Seminar to help shape their individual views and understanding of the task using dialogue instead of debate.</li><li>■ <b>Extra Support</b> – Provide struggling students with sentence starters and frameworks for their quick-writes. Example: I believe a _____ system would be the best type of system because _____.</li></ul>
1 class period	<u>2.Task and rubric analysis</u> Ability to understand and explain the task’s prompt and rubric.	<u>Short Response</u> In your own words, write a brief explanation of what the task is asking you to do (students respond below the quick-write).  <u>Rubric Translation:</u> Students will translate the rubric in their own words.	No scoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Have students share responses so that students can hear how each other are interpreting the task and encourage them to help each other when appropriate.</li><li>■ <u>Rubric Translation Activity</u> – Introduce rubric to class. In small groups, students will translate their assigned piece of the rubric in their own words. Students will then participate in a jigsaw and gallery walk to share /take notes on rubric translations.</li><li>■ <b>Extra Support</b> – Specifically plan groups to provide ideal peer-support for students who need it.</li><li>■ Teacher work - Review each student’s responses (task analysis and quick-write) to ensure she/he understands the task.</li></ul>

## SKILLS CLUSTER 2: READING PROCESS

1 Class Period	<u>Pre-Reading</u> Ability to select appropriate texts and understand necessary reading strategies needed for the task.	<u>Reading Strategy List</u> 1) What strategies do you use to help you process your reading? 2) What information do you already know about topic of the first article: the healthcare debate and how taxes are related?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ List of 5-6 of strategies for reading (can be strategies of others as well)</li> <li>■ Participates in class discussion of reading strategies and current knowledge of article topic.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ As individuals, students write down 1 or 2 strategies that they use to help them understand what they read. Students share responses in pairs then must find 3 other strategy ideas from classmates to add to their lists (“give one, get one” activity).</li> <li>■ Create a class list of reading strategies and content knowledge of first article.</li> <li>■ <b>Extra Support</b> – Create bookmarks or laminated cards of reading strategies so students have consistent reminders of strategies.</li> </ul>
<b>The following skills, Active Reading and Note-Taking, are completed in conjunction with each other for each text.</b>				
3 Class Periods	<u>2: Active reading</u> Ability to understand necessary reading strategies needed for the task and develop an understanding of a text by locating words and phrases that identify key concepts and facts, or information.	<u>Annotated Articles</u> Use annotation techniques and other reading strategies to demonstrate your reading process and your level of interaction with the text.  <u>Vocabulary List</u> In your notebook, list words and phrases essential to the texts. Add definitions, and (if appropriate) notes on connotation in this context.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Annotated or “actively read” article has a variety of marks (circles, underlining, stars, highlights, etc.). Annotation also includes written questions, connections, and insights in the margins. *Use annotation rubric to provide students feedback on their reading</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Frontload vocabulary synonyms for market and command economies. Students record in Vocabulary Notes section of their Writer’s Notebook.</li> <li>■ Instruction for the <u>first article</u> (“Should the U.S. have a National Healthcare System?”) should be very explicit and include group/ partner work and teacher modeling.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt;&gt; Teacher reads first 3 sentences of the article, modeling active reading and strategies.</li> <li>&gt;&gt; Students finish reading the rest of the article using a “think aloud” process with a partner.</li> <li>&gt;&gt; Teacher asks for a list of vocabulary that students struggled with and class discusses strategies for understanding words in context. Students record new vocabulary in the Vocabulary Notes section of their Writer’s Notebook.</li> </ul> </li> <li>■ Students actively read and annotate the next 3 articles mostly independently with some teacher guidance and reflection in pairs.</li> </ul>

(Same 3 class periods)	<u>Note-Taking</u> Ability to read purposefully and select relevant information; to summarize and/or paraphrase.	<u>Notes and Short Response</u> Summarize the articles and respond to focus questions to demonstrate depth and understanding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Summaries contain “who, what, where, when and why”</li> <li>■ Focus questions have an appropriate response - emerging or clear opinion is evident.</li> <li>■ Writes in readable prose</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Brief review of summary writing strategies.</li> <li>■ Use a variety of reading/writing activities to help students improve processing skills of main idea and significance.     &gt;&gt; 25 word summary, QAR, reciprocal teaching, etc</li> <li>■ Students get independent work time to respond to focus questions after completing the summary. Focus questions should lead students to take a stance on the market and command aspects of the article’s subject. When possible, students should discuss responses in pairs or as a group.</li> <li>■ <b>Extra Support</b> – These activities are designed to provide support for all reading-levels.</li> </ul>
I Class Period	<u>Organizing Notes</u> Ability to prioritize and narrow notes and other information.	<u>Notes and Graphic Organizer</u> Prioritize relevant information in the “organizing notes” section of your Writer’s Notebook.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Creates a prioritized set of notes that categorizes evidence.</li> <li>■ Suggests implications drawn from information about the economic systems.</li> <li>■ Writes in readable prose.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Students place relevant information from the texts and their own background knowledge into the graphic organizer.</li> <li>■ Students will prioritize the information in the graphic organizer by identifying which pieces of evidence they will use in their essay.</li> <li>■ <b>Extra Support</b> – Provide students with specific examples of what kinds of information belongs in each section of the graphic organizer. Create a list of “leading questions” to help guide students in the process. Example: “What is one fact you learned from the healthcare article that supports a market system?”</li> </ul>

### SKILLS CLUSTER 3: TRANSITION TO WRITING

I Class Period	<u>Bridging Conversation</u> Ability to transition from reading or researching phase to the writing phase.	<u>Short Response</u> In a quick write, write brief overview of your essay. How will it be constructed and what is your central argument?	No scoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Review professional or other samples of writing type and structure.</li> <li>■ Students will deconstruct and evaluate the article “As Cuba gives Capitalism a try, Experts Ponder Future” using the rubric to guide critique. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt;&gt; Demonstrate patterns of development (e.g. from most important to least important)</li> <li>&gt;&gt; Note the difference between an “explanation” and an “argument”</li> <li>&gt;&gt; Evaluate effectiveness – Do you get the information and explanation you expect? Why?</li> </ul> </li> <li>■ Discuss the process for writing the essay.</li> <li>■ <b>Extra Support</b> – Struggling readers should focus on fewer rubric components such as Reading/Research and Controlling Idea.</li> </ul>
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### SKILLS CLUSTER 4: WRITING PROCESS

I Class Period	<u>Initiation of Task</u> Ability to establish a controlling idea and consolidate information relevant to task.	<u>Paragraph</u> 1) Write a formal claim in your Writer’s Notebook using your quick-writes, notes, and article information to ensure a strong controlling idea. 2) Write a draft introduction that will set the context for your claim.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Writes a claim that establishes a controlling idea and identifies key points that support development</li> <li>■ Writes a draft introduction that sets an appropriate context for the claim.</li> <li>■ Writes in readable prose.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Before students write their formal claim, review qualities of a strong claim as a class: must be an argument, include simple defense of the argument, and include categories to lead reader and organize essay.</li> <li>■ In pairs, students will edit sample claim statements provided by the teacher. As a class, go over each thesis statement, asking for volunteers to identify the strong and weak characteristics of each statement.</li> <li>■ After students have finished writing a formal claim, review the qualities of a strong opening paragraph: HOTT- Hook, Overview, Thesis, Transition.</li> <li>■ In pairs, students share their claim statements and introduction. Student volunteers share their claim and introduction with the class for critique.</li> <li>■ <b>Extra Support</b> – Provide students with sentence frames to help write the claim. For example: A _____ economic system is the ideal system because it provides a country with _____ and _____ (choose two “goals” from your notes).</li> </ul>
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I Class Period	<u>2. Planning</u> Ability to develop a line of thought and text structure appropriate to an argumentation task.	<u>Outline/Plan</u> Create an outline including key elements drawn from your research and order them in some logical way (e.g. chronologically, sequentially).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Applies an outline strategy to develop reasoning for argument.</li> <li>■ Draws a credible implication from information about the differences between economic systems.</li> <li>■ Writes in readable prose.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Review text requirements: Students must use evidence from a minimum of 3 different texts in their essay.</li> <li>■ Students independently write an outline using the template in their Writer's Notebook.</li> <li>■ In small groups, students share how they will organize their essays.</li> <li>■ <b>Extra Support</b> – Students will focus on providing evidence from only one or two texts in their outline.</li> </ul>
I Class Period	<u>Development</u> Ability to construct an initial draft with an emerging line of thought and structure.	<u>Rough Draft</u> Write a rough draft of your essay consisting of 4-5 paragraphs. Includes an introduction, 2-3 body paragraphs and a conclusion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Provides an opening to include a controlling idea and an opening strategy relevant to the prompt.</li> <li>■ Provides an initial draft with all elements of the prompt addressed.</li> <li>■ Writes in readable prose.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Review strategies for constructing body paragraphs: TEST – Topic sentence, Evidence, Significance, and Transition.</li> <li>■ Create stations where students can get guidance on certain aspects of the essay: introduction, claim, evidence/analysis, and conclusion. Assign a strong student-writer at each station to help guide discussion and provide peer-review. Teacher spends time at each station assisting students.</li> <li>■ <b>Extra Support</b> – Teacher leads “station” for students who need extra support in developing the essay.</li> </ul>

2 Class Periods	<u>Revision and Editing</u> Ability to apply revision strategies to refine development of argument, including line of thought, language usage, tone and presentation.	<u>Revised Draft</u> Apply revision strategies for clarity, logic, language, cohesion, appearance, and conventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Demonstrates use of revision strategies that clarify logic and development of ideas; includes relevant details; improves word-usage and phrasing; and creates smooth transitions between sentences and paragraphs.</li> <li>■ Applies a text structure to organize reading material content and to explain key points related to the prompt.</li> <li>■ Provides complete draft with all parts.</li> <li>■ Supports the opening in the later sections with evidence and citations.</li> <li>■ Improves earlier edition.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Students give each other feedback on rough drafts using the “peer review template”.</li> <li>■ Students can email essays to teacher for efficient and basic feedback.</li> <li>■ Discuss strategies for citing information using the Writer’s Notebook – MLA citation methods, quoting, paraphrasing.</li> </ul>
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Final Draft	Submit your final draft before or on due date for scoring and feedback.
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## MATERIALS, REFERENCES AND SUPPORTS

FOR TEACHERS	FOR STUDENTS
<p><u>Texts</u></p> <p>John Edwards and Michael Tanner, “Should the U.S. have a National Healthcare System?” (Article) <a href="http://teacher.scholastic.com/scholasticnews/indepth/upfront/index.asp">http://teacher.scholastic.com/scholasticnews/indepth/upfront/index.asp</a></p> <p>David Kestenbaum, “Denmark Thrives Despite High Taxes.” National Public Radio, <i>All Things Considered</i> (transcript of broadcast) <a href="http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=123126942">http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=123126942</a></p> <p>William Booth, “As Cuba gives Capitalism a try, Experts Ponder Future.” <i>Washington Post</i> <a href="http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/09/16/AR2010091607381.html">http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/09/16/AR2010091607381.html</a></p> <p>Paul Krugman and John Tierney, “Wal-Mart: Good or Evil.” <i>New York Times Upfront Magazine</i> (article) <a href="http://teacher.scholastic.com/scholasticnews/indepth/upfront/index.asp">http://teacher.scholastic.com/scholasticnews/indepth/upfront/index.asp</a></p> <p>“The World’s Best Countries” <i>Newsweek Magazine Online</i> (interactive infographic) <a href="http://www.newsweek.com/2010/08/15/interactive-infographic-of-the-worlds-best-countries.html">http://www.newsweek.com/2010/08/15/interactive-infographic-of-the-worlds-best-countries.html</a></p> <p><u>Optional Texts:</u></p> <p>William Neuman, “Should the Government Tax Your Coke” <i>New York Times Upfront Magazine</i> (article) <a href="http://teacher.scholastic.com/scholasticnews/indepth/upfront/index.asp">http://teacher.scholastic.com/scholasticnews/indepth/upfront/index.asp</a></p> <p>Thomas Friedman, “Start-Ups, Not Bailouts.” <i>New York Times</i> (article) <a href="http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/04/opinion/04friedman.html?_r=1&amp;scp=1&amp;sq=Start-Ups,%20Not%20Bailouts&amp;st=cse">http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/04/opinion/04friedman.html?_r=1&amp;scp=1&amp;sq=Start-Ups,%20Not%20Bailouts&amp;st=cse</a></p>	<p><u>Included in Appendix:</u></p> <p>Writer’s Notebook</p> <p>Rubric Translation</p> <p>Meta-Cognitive Log</p> <p>Active Reading Rubric</p> <p>Peer-Review Guide</p>

## Section 4: What Results?

### CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT TASK (OPTIONAL: MAY BE USED AS PRE-TEST OR POST-TEST)

Background to share with students (optional):	The government plays a significant role in the development of America's economy. Voters elect leaders who will represent their views on the government's role in the economy. The federal minimum wage is a government regulation created in the 1930s to ensure workers receive adequate pay from employers. However, minimum wage is a government-intervention that has both positive and negative effects on America's economy and its value is debated amongst politicians and the public.
Classroom assessment task	Do you believe that the federal minimum wage in America should be raised? After reading the article "Should the federal minimum wage be raised?", write a short essay that addresses the question and support your position with evidence from the texts. L2 Be sure to acknowledge competing views.
Reading texts:	Edward Kennedy and Todd Stottlemeyer, "Should the federal minimum wage be raised?" <a href="http://teacher.scholastic.com/scholasticnews/indepth/upfront/debate/index.asp?article=d0918">http://teacher.scholastic.com/scholasticnews/indepth/upfront/debate/index.asp?article=d0918</a>

## ARGUMENTATION CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

LDC Argumentation Classroom Assessment Rubric	
MEETS EXPECTATIONS	
Focus	Addresses the prompt and stays on task; provides a generally convincing response.
Reading/Research	Demonstrates generally effective use of reading material to develop an argument.
Controlling Idea	Establishes a credible claim and supports an argument that is logical and generally convincing. (L2) Acknowledges competing arguments while defending the claim.
Development	Develops reasoning to support claim; provides evidence from text(s) in the form of examples or explanations relevant to the argument (L3) Makes a relevant connection(s) that supports argument.
Organization	Applies an appropriate text structure to address specific requirements of the prompt.
Conventions	Demonstrates a command of standard English conventions and cohesion; employs language and tone appropriate to audience and purpose.
NOT YET	
Focus	Attempts to address prompt but lacks focus or is off-task.
Reading/Research	Demonstrates weak use of reading material to develop argument.
Controlling Idea	Establishes a claim and attempts to support an argument but is not convincing; (L2) Attempts to acknowledge competing arguments.
Development	Reasoning is not clear; examples or explanations are weak or irrelevant. (L3) Connection is weak or not relevant.
Organization	Provides an ineffective structure; composition does not address requirements of the prompt.
Conventions	Demonstrates a weak command of standard English conventions; lacks cohesion; language and tone are not appropriate to audience and purpose.



## Teacher Work Section

Teacher thoughts: The module was very effective in my Economics classes. A few ideas to keep in mind for revision of the module:

- Provide more supports for ELL students who have very limited English.
- Use Meta-cognitive Logs instead of the Summary/Analysis Template.

Possible variations:

- Formal class debate about market vs. democratic socialist economy.
- Students are “stranded on an island” in small groups and must create an economic system to survive and create their idea of an ideal structure for the island’s government and economy.



## **Sample Module 2: Opportunities and Challenges U.S. Immigration 1880-1930**



## Information Sheet

Module overview:	Between the years 1880 and 1930, immigration to the U.S. was at its peak. People from different countries, cultures, and religious values braved long, treacherous travels to have their chance at the American dream. In this module, students examine who came to the U.S. between 1880 and 1930, their reasons for immigrating, and what their experiences were like once they arrived in America. Students will read both primary and secondary sources about the immigrant experience and evaluate the motives and efforts made by the U.S. government to try to restrict immigration.
Template task (include number, type, level):	<b>Task 2 (Argumentation/Analysis L1, 2, 3):</b> [Insert question] After reading _____ (literature or informational texts), write _____ (essay or substitute) that addresses the question and support your position with evidence from the text(s). <b>L2</b> Be sure to acknowledge competing views. <b>L3</b> Give examples from past or current events or issues to illustrate and clarify your position.
Teaching task:	What do the immigration laws written between 1880 and 1930 tell us about American values during that time period? After reading primary and secondary sources about U.S. immigration and related legislation between 1880 and 1930, write an essay that addresses the question and support your position with evidence from the texts. <b>L2</b> Be sure to acknowledge competing views. <b>L3</b> Give examples from past or current events or issues to illustrate and clarify your position.
Grade(s)/Level:	6-8
Discipline:	Social Studies
Course:	American History
Author(s):	Melissa Hedt
Contact information:	Melissa Hedt, Asheville City Schools melissa.hedt@asheville.k12.nc.us

## Section 1: What Task?

### A. Teaching task

What do the immigration laws written between 1880 and 1930 tell us about American values during that time period? After reading primary and secondary sources about U.S. immigration and related legislation between 1880 and 1930, write an essay that addresses the question and support your position with evidence from the texts. L2 Be sure to acknowledge competing views. L3 Give one or more examples from past or current events or issues to illustrate and clarify your position.

**B. Standards:** The CCSS Anchor Standards from the common core standards are already identified by the Literacy Design Collaborative for all Argumentation tasks.

### COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

READING STANDARDS FOR ARGUMENTATION	
“Built-in” Reading Standards	“When Appropriate” Reading Standards
1 – Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.	3 – Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.
2 – Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.	5 – Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
4 – Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.	6 – Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
10 – Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.	7 – Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
	8 – Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.
	9 – Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.



WRITING STANDARDS FOR ARGUMENTATION	
“Built-in” Writing Standards	“When Appropriate” Writing Standards
1 – Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.	2 – Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
4 – Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.	3 – Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
5 – Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.	6 – Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.
9 – Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.	7 – Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
10 – Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audience.	8 – Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.

**Module also addresses the following Common Core State Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies and Speaking and Listening Standards:**

**Reading Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies 6-8:** 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, and 9

**Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies 6-8:** 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10

**Speaking and Listening Standards 6-8:** 1, 2, and 6

Codes for identifying standards aligned to Instructional Ladder: RH 6-8 and WH 6-8 refer to CCS History Standards for Literacy. R and W refer to CCSR ELA Standards.

**C. Teaching Task:** Design your teaching task.

**Background:** America is itself a fabric woven from the threads of a diversity of people. We are who we are because of our immigrant past. At the height of immigration, 1880-1930, approximately 27 million people immigrated to the U.S., many coming through Ellis Island. These people faced challenges both during the journey and once they arrived here, many coming with illnesses and very little or no money. During this same time, the U.S. was writing and passing legislation designed to restrict the immigration of certain groups of people. Which immigrant groups were restricted and what were the reasons?

**Prompt:** What do the immigration laws written between 1880 and 1930 tell us about American values during that time period? After reading primary and secondary sources about U.S. immigration and related legislation between 1880 and 1930, write an essay that addresses the question and support your position with evidence from the texts. L2 Be sure to acknowledge competing views. L3 Give examples from past or current events or issues to illustrate and clarify your position.

**Extension (optional):** Students compile essays into a book that is then shared as follows: 1) two copies for circulation in school library; 2) two copies made available to local genealogical society; and 3) one copy submitted to the library at Ellis Island National Park.

# scoring rubric for argumentation template tasks

Scoring Elements	Not Yet		Approaches Expectations		Meets Expectations		Advanced
	1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5	4
Focus	Attempts to address prompt, but lacks focus or is off-task.		Addresses prompt appropriately and establishes a position, but focus is uneven.		Addresses prompt appropriately and maintains a clear, steady focus. Provides a generally convincing position.		Addresses all aspects of prompt appropriately with a consistently strong focus and convincing position.
Controlling Idea	Attempts to establish a claim, but lacks a clear purpose. (L2) Makes no mention of counter claims.		Establishes a claim. (L2) Makes note of counter claims.		Establishes a credible claim. (L2) Develops claim and counter claims fairly.		Establishes and maintains a substantive and credible claim or proposal. (L2) Develops claims and counter claims fairly and thoroughly.
Reading/ Research	Attempts to reference reading materials to develop response, but lacks connections or relevance to the purpose of the prompt.		Presents information from reading materials relevant to the purpose of the prompt with minor lapses in accuracy or completeness.		Accurately presents details from reading materials relevant to the purpose of the prompt to develop argument or claim.		Accurately and effectively presents important details from reading materials to develop argument or claim.
Development	Attempts to provide details in response to the prompt, but lacks sufficient development or relevance to the purpose of the prompt. (L3) Makes no connections or a connection that is irrelevant to argument or claim.		Presents appropriate details to support and develop the focus, controlling idea, or claim, with minor lapses in the reasoning, examples, or explanations. (L3) Makes a connection with a weak or unclear relationship to argument or claim.		Presents appropriate and sufficient details to support and develop the focus, controlling idea, or claim. (L3) Makes a relevant connection to clarify argument or claim.		Presents thorough and detailed information to effectively support and develop the focus, controlling idea, or claim. (L3) Makes a clarifying connection(s) that illuminates argument and adds depth to reasoning.
Organization	Attempts to organize ideas, but lacks control of structure.		Uses an appropriate organizational structure for development of reasoning and logic, with minor lapses in structure and/or coherence.		Maintains an appropriate organizational structure to address specific requirements of the prompt. Structure reveals the reasoning and logic of the argument.		Maintains an organizational structure that intentionally and effectively enhances the presentation of information as required by the specific prompt. Structure enhances development of the reasoning and logic of the argument.
Conventions	Attempts to demonstrate standard English conventions, but lacks cohesion and control of grammar, usage, and mechanics. Sources are used without citation.		Demonstrates an uneven command of standard English conventions and cohesion. Uses language and tone with some inaccurate, inappropriate, or uneven features. Inconsistently cites sources.		Demonstrates a command of standard English conventions and cohesion, with few errors. Response includes language and tone appropriate to the audience, purpose, and specific requirements of the prompt. Cites sources using appropriate format with only minor errors.		Demonstrates and maintains a well-developed command of standard English conventions and cohesion, with few errors. Response includes language and tone consistently appropriate to the audience, purpose, and specific requirements of the prompt. Consistently cites sources using appropriate format.
Content Understanding	Attempts to include disciplinary content in argument, but understanding of content is weak; content is irrelevant, inappropriate, or inaccurate.		Briefly notes disciplinary content relevant to the prompt; shows basic or uneven understanding of content; minor errors in explanation.		Accurately presents disciplinary content relevant to the prompt with sufficient explanations that demonstrate understanding.		Integrates relevant and accurate disciplinary content with thorough explanations that demonstrate in-depth understanding.

## Section 2: What Skills?

Each module is required to identify the specific student skills, define them, and cluster them. The prototype below shows one way to do that. Module builders can use this version, change it, or create a different skill list, different definitions, and different clusters using the chart.

SKILLS CLUSTER 1: PREPARING FOR THE TASK	
Bridging Conversation	Ability to connect the task and new content to existing knowledge, skills, experiences, interests, and concerns.
SKILLS CLUSTER 2: READING PROCESS	
Reading “habits of mind”	Ability to select appropriate texts and understand necessary reading strategies needed for the task.
Essential vocabulary	Ability to apply strategies for developing an understanding of a text by locating words and phrases that identify key concepts and facts, or information.
Note-taking	Ability to read purposefully and select relevant information; to summarize and/or paraphrase.
Research	Ability to gather information about the topic independently.
SKILLS CLUSTER 3: DIALOGUE PROCESS (PAIDEIA SEMINAR)	
Pre-seminar content	Ability to prepare for seminar discussion by reading text and discussing relevant background knowledge.
Pre-seminar process	Ability to reflect on personal communication habits and select appropriate speaking and listening goals.
Seminar	Ability to think critically and collaboratively in a group about concepts and ideas of a text through a structured Socratic seminar.
Post-seminar process	Ability to self-assess on speaking and listening skills practiced in the seminar and note relevant communication goals for future discussions.
SKILLS CLUSTER 4: TRANSITION TO WRITING	
Task analysis	Ability to understand the task’s prompt and rubric and to transition from reading and researching phase to the writing phase.
SKILLS CLUSTER 5: WRITING PROCESS	
Planning	Ability to establish a thesis and develop a line of thought supportive of thesis statement and text structure appropriate to an argumentation task.
Development	Ability to construct an initial draft with an emerging line of thought and structure.
Revision	Ability to apply revision strategies to refine development of argument, including line of thought, language usage, and tone as appropriate to audience and purpose.
Editing	Ability to apply editing strategies and presentation applications.

## Section 3: What Instruction?

The following is an LDC example instructional ladder to be adopted, adapted or deleted by the module developers to build their own. This is one example of an instructional ladder. Just delete the language and use the chart to create your own instructional ladder specific to the skills you have identified in Section 2.

### LDC INSTRUCTIONAL LADDER I

#### SKILLS CLUSTER I: Preparing for the Task

**I. Bridging conversation:** *Ability to connect the task and new content to existing knowledge, skills, experiences, interests, and concerns.*

Students cite *specific evidence* from Ellis Island photographs 1880-1930 (*primary source*) to *support analysis* of the photographs. [RH.6-8.1] [R 1&3]

Students will engage *collaboratively* in a *small group discussion* about the photographs from Ellis Island, *building on each others' ideas* and *expressing their own clearly*. [SL.6-12.1]

Students will *analyze the main ideas and supporting details* presented in the Ellis Island photographs and *explain how the ideas clarify* understanding of immigration to the U.S. 1880-1930. [SL.6-12.2]

#### Mini-task [W10]

- Prompt: Discuss and write about the photographs from Ellis Island, 1880-1930, using the Photo Analysis Tool.
  - \* **Note:** *The mini-task serves as a pre-test and provides some information to teachers as to students' understandings and writing skills.*
- Product: short responses
- Mini-task scoring: No scoring
  - \* **Note:** *Teachers should read student responses to help them gauge students' understandings and what supports may be needed.*

#### Instructional strategies/notes

- Distribute Ellis Island photos to groups of 3-4 students, one photo per group.
  - Review accountable talk with students: respectful conversation and debate, explaining, citing text accurately, citing more than one example, and drawing conclusions with others.
- Students use Photo Analysis Tool (appendix) to discuss and write about the photos.
- Brainstorm with class: what do you already know about immigration to the U.S. during this time period? List ideas on board.

**Suggested Pacing:** 20-30 minutes

### **Professional Development/Preparation**

- Discuss photo analysis process and tool.

### **SKILLS CLUSTER 2: Reading Process**

**I. Reading “habits of mind”:** *Ability to select appropriate texts and understand necessary reading strategies needed for the task.*

Students *determine the central ideas or information* about the experience of immigrants to the U.S. 1880-1930 by reading excerpts from Jacob Riis’ How the Other Half Lives, other *primary and secondary sources*, and *provide accurate summaries* of those texts. [RH.6-8.2] [RI&8]

Students *identify aspects* of How the Other Half Lives that reveal Jacob Riis’ *point of view or purpose*. [RH.6-8.6] [R 6-8.3]

Students *integrate visual information in the graph* “The Peopling of America” ([http://www.ellisland.org/immexp/wseix\\_5\\_3.asp](http://www.ellisland.org/immexp/wseix_5_3.asp)) with related text *information about immigration 1880-1930*. [RH.6-8.7]

### **Mini-task [R9]**

- Prompt: Read selected excerpts from Jacob Riis’ How the Other Half Lives, a first-hand account of the experiences of immigrants in New York City at the turn of the century. Select an additional text about the immigrant experience to read. Analyze the graph “The Peopling of America,” relating information conveyed in the graph with other texts read.
  - Product: short response
  - Mini-task scoring: No scoring
- \* **Note:** *Students need to keep their notes from all readings throughout module for reference when writing task prompt.*

### **Instructional strategies/notes**

- Teacher should first select a section to read aloud and model text reading, thinking, and responses to questions (below).
- Teacher or students may select section from How the Other Half Lives. At least one chapter is recommended.
- Students should write brief responses to the following questions after reading:
  - > What is this about? What important information is conveyed?
  - > Whose story is being told?
  - > What is the author trying to say about life and the world?



- Teacher may assign chapters to different students and allow students to share in a jigsaw method.
- Students should select at least one additional text from the resource list to read and respond to the same questions.
- Students examine graph “The Peopling of America.” Using the following questions, students discuss with partner and write brief responses:
  - > What is important about this information?
  - > How does the information in the graph relate to the other information we read in the texts?

**Suggested Pacing:** 60-70 minutes

### **Professional Development/Preparation**

- Review and discuss think-aloud and reading strategies for non-fiction texts. (Recommended resources: [I Read It But I Don't Get It](#), Chris Tovani, and [When Kids Can't Read What Teachers Can Do](#), Kylene Beers)

**2. Essential vocabulary:** *Ability to apply strategies for developing an understanding of a text by locating words and phrases that identify key concepts and facts, or information.*

Students determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in Jacob Riis’ [How the Other Half Lives](#). Students create essential vocabulary list to be built upon during readings and discussions of primary and secondary sources about immigration throughout module. [RH.6-8.4][R 1]

### **Mini-task [RI]**

- Prompt: In your notebook, identify key words or phrases as you read and define them denotatively and connotatively in context of the passage in the work you are reading. Add terms we identified as the “language of the discipline.”
- Product: Vocabulary notebook entries
- Mini-task scoring: Identifies and prioritizes essential content vocabulary.

### **Instructional strategies/notes**

- Students select and prioritize vocabulary by going back to the Jacob Riis text and reading through again, circling or highlighting words that are unfamiliar or important to the topic of immigration.
- Class generates vocabulary list together from words selected by students and sorts the list into two categories: words related specifically to the Riis text, and words important for understanding, communicating, and writing about immigration.
- Words selected for the broader understanding of the topic are displayed throughout the module for students to reference. Class constructs meaning of these essential terms together through discussion, rereading texts as necessary.
- Students should continue to identify words or phrases while reading additional texts in module, building essential vocabulary list.

**Suggested Pacing:** 20-30 minutes

### Professional Development/Preparation

- Determine strategies for teaching vocabulary and language of the discipline and literacy practices in reading and composition. (Inside Words, Janet Allen and Building Academic Vocabulary, Robert Marzano)

**3. Note-taking:** *Ability to read purposefully and select relevant information; to summarize and/or paraphrase.*

Students *cite specific evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources* about the immigration laws written 1880-1930 (see resource list for sources) while reading and note-taking. [RH.6-8.1][W 1]

Students *determine the central ideas or information* about the immigration laws written 1880-1930 by reading “A Summary of Immigration Laws” (<http://www.gjenvick.com/Immigration/LawsAndActs/SummaryOfImmigrationLaws.html>), other *primary and secondary sources* (see resource list for sources), and *provide accurate summaries* of those texts. [RH.6-8.2][RI&9]

Students *analyze the relationship between the primary source* document “Immigration Act of 1921” (<http://archives.lib.cua.edu/res/docs/education/immigration/pdfs/1921-immigration-bill.pdf>) and a *secondary source* about the Act, “Emergency Quota Act” ([http://wapedia.mobi/en/Emergency\\_Quota\\_Act](http://wapedia.mobi/en/Emergency_Quota_Act)). [RH.6-8.9][R 3]

Students *gather relevant information from multiple sources*, primary and secondary, about immigration laws written 1880-1930 (see resource list for sources); *assess the credibility of each source*; and *note-take while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation*. [WH.6-12.8] [W 9]

### Mini-task [W9]

- Prompt: Using a note taking method, select information (passages, facts, data) from primary and secondary sources about immigration laws written between 1880 and 1930; list each source and note relevant information.  
L2 What strategies will you use to discern “credible sources”?  
What does “plagiarism” mean and what strategies can you use to avoid it?
- Product: Notes & short response
- Mini-task scoring: Selects relevant material to support response to task (include L2 and 3 if applied to task) and answers question about plagiarism correctly and provides appropriate strategies for avoiding it.

## Instructional strategies/notes

- Review policy for plagiarism and develop students' understanding of it.
- Teach strategies for note-taking, providing students with several methods, explaining there are many ways to organize thinking about a text. Students should read a chunk of text, then think about the information and the best ways to organize. Examples: compare/contrast, rank information, summarize, cause/effect, main idea, pro's and con's, diagrams, pictures and captions, "I learned ..." Or "I think ..."
- Model note-taking for students with the first portion of "A Summary of the Immigration Laws of the U.S. from 1882" (<http://www.gjenvick.com/Immigration/LawsAndActs/SummaryOfImmigrationLaws.html>).
- Students should read and take notes on the remainder of the article and additional articles: Chinese Exclusion Act, Emergency Quota Act, Immigration Act of 1924, and related primary documents (see resource list).
- Discuss the term "relevant" and what it means stay on task – two demands embedded in the rubric.
- L2 Discuss what is meant by "credible sources" and strategies for knowing what is a credible source.
- Identify any gaps or unanswered questions as you read about your topic.

**Suggested Pacing:** 60-70 minutes

## Professional Development/Preparation

- Strategies for teaching note taking skills, summarizing, and paraphrasing.
- L2 Discuss and share strategies for discerning credible sources from suspect ones.
- Review or develop a plagiarism policy and determine strategies for avoiding it. Discuss and agree upon a standard format for citation (i.e. MLA, APA).

## 4. Research: Ability to gather information about the topic independently.

Students *cite specific evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources* about the experiences of a specific immigrant group (student selected) 1880-1930 while reading and note-taking. [RH.6-8.1]

Students *determine the central ideas or information* about the experiences of a specific immigrant group 1880-1930 and *provide accurate summaries* of those texts during independent research. [RH.6-8.2]

Students *integrate visual information with other information in print and digital texts* while researching the experiences of a specific immigrant group 1880-1930. [RH.6-8.7]

Students *conduct short research projects to answer questions* about the experiences of a specific immigrant group 1880-1930, *drawing on several*

*sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration. [WH.6-12.7]*

*Students gather relevant information from multiple sources, primary and secondary, about the experiences of a specific immigrant group and implications of the immigration laws written 1880-1930 on that immigrant group (see resource list for sources); assess the credibility of each source; and note-take while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation. [WH.6-12.8]*

*Students draw evidence from informational texts to support research on the experiences of a specific immigrant group 1880-1930. [WH.6-12.9]*

### **Mini-task [R9,W9]**

- Prompt: Select an immigrant group from the 1880-1930 time period to research, addressing both questions provided and self-generated questions.
- Product: Notes about a selected immigrant group addressing questions
- Mini-task scoring: Addresses all required questions in notes and cite sources.

### **Instructional strategies/notes**

- Students select an immigrant group to research independently.
- Students should address the following questions in their research and notes:
  - > Who is the group and how many came to the U.S. between 1880 and 1930?
  - > Why did this immigrant group come to the U.S.? (Push and pull factors)
  - > What was their experience after coming to the U.S.?
  - > What were the implications of the three pieces of legislation studied (Chinese Exclusion Act, Immigration Act of 1921, and Immigration Act of 1924) on this particular group of people?
- Students should generate their own questions, relevant to the task, to research.
- Assist students in selecting resources (see resources for recommendations).
- Provide students with template for bibliography and explain format and use.
- Note to students that information gathered in the research cluster will be especially helpful with the L3 task response (give one or more examples from past or current events or issues to illustrate and clarify your position).

**Suggested Pacing:** 100-120 minutes

Professional Development/Preparation

- Discuss and analyze the appropriateness of texts for specific tasks.
- Review and discuss reading strategies that pertain to specific types of texts and to the task.
- Agree on a bibliographic format.
- Plan for students who need extra time, resources, or assistance.

### SKILLS CLUSTER 3: Dialogue Process (Paideia Seminar)

**SEMINAR TEXT:** “The New Colossus,” Emma Lazarus, 1886.

(<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~cap/liberty/lazaruspoem.html>)

**Ideas and Values:** assembly, dream, freedom, liberty, symbol

**1. Pre-Seminar Content Preparation:** *Ability to prepare for seminar discussion by reading text and discussing relevant background information.*

Students *come to discussion prepared, having read “The New Colossus” and researched immigration to the U.S. 1880-1930 information;* [SL.6-12.1a]

Content – Present relevant background information:

- The nature of the original Colossus at Rhodes
- The size, structure, location of the Statue of Liberty
- The history of the statue (gift from the French, etc.)
- The structure of a sonnet as applied to this sonnet
- Vocabulary such as brazen, exile, pomp, etc.

Clarify that U.S. fund raisers held a contest to determine the inscription on the Statue of Liberty and Emma Lazarus (a young Jewish woman) won with “The New Colossus.”

Have a volunteer read the text aloud.

**2. Pre-Seminar Process Preparation:** *Ability to reflect on personal communication habits and select appropriate speaking and listening goals.*

Students *set specific goals for seminar participation based on guidelines and track progress toward specific goals.* [SL.6-12.1b]

- Mini-Task Prompt: Based on a selected list of Speaking and Listening behaviors, note in writing a goal for your personal participation in the upcoming dialogue. (see Speaking and Listening Rubric and sample “Seminar Process Assessment” form in Appendices).
- Product: Seminar Process Assessment form or some written personal goal completed prior to seminar
- Mini-Task scoring guide: Chooses appropriate individual process goal based on past seminar performance

### **Instructional Strategies/Notes:**

Teacher should identify a collection of appropriate speaking and listening goals for the group. Students select what they will work on individually and note it in writing. The group participation goal is discussed and posted where all can see.

**Suggested Pacing:** 15-20 minutes

### **Professional Development/Preparation:**

- Teachers should be familiar with the Process step of Paideia Seminar including: definition and purpose for having the dialogue, role and responsibility of facilitator and participants, steps to guide personal and group process goals.

**3. Seminar:** *Ability to think critically and collaboratively in a group about concepts and ideas of a text through a structured Socratic seminar.*

Students *engage effectively* in a whole-class collaborative discussion on the meaning of “The New Colossus” and immigration to the U.S., *building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.* [SL.6-12.1]

Students *follow rules* for Paideia Seminar discussion, *pose questions* during seminar that elicit elaboration, *respond to others’ questions and comments with ideas that bring the discussion back on topic*, citing text as needed. Students *acknowledge new information expressed by others* during the seminar discussion and, *when warranted, modify their own views.* [SL.6-12.1b,c,d]

Students *adapt speech* according to seminar guidelines, *demonstrating command of formal English.* [SL.6-12.6]

### **Seminar Questions**

*Opening* – Identify main ideas from the text:

What is another title for this poem that more clearly expresses its meaning? (round-robin) Explain your title. (spontaneous)

*Core* – Focus/analyze textual details:

Why do you think the French sculptor and the American poet chose to make “the new colossus” a woman?



According to the poem, what is the “golden door”? Why do you think it is “golden”?

What sorts of people does this poem – and by extension the Statue – invite into the United States? Do you agree with this invitation? Why or why not?

This poem was written in 1883, just at the beginning of the great influx of immigrants into the U.S. Some of the later immigration laws that we have studied seem to be in direct conflict with the poem. Why do you think that is the case?

*Closing* – Personalize and apply the textual ideas:

If you were asked to write the inscription on the base of the Statue of Liberty, what would the statue have inscribed on its base? How is your message different from that of Emma Lazarus?

**Suggested Pacing:** 45-60 minutes depending on the size and experience of group.

### **Professional Development/Preparation:**

- Select text(s) for Seminar and craft seminar questions for Cluster 2. See pp. 27-31. Teaching Thinking Through Dialogue
- Create open-ended questions for Seminar. See pp. 32-40.

**4. Post-Seminar Process:** *Ability to self-assess on speaking and listening skills practiced in the seminar and note relevant communication goals for future discussions.*

Students set specific goals for seminar participation based on guidelines and track progress toward specific goals. [SL.6-12.1b]

### **Mini-Task Prompt: [WI0]**

*Reflecting back on personal participation goal (see Appendices, p. 17), students fill out form or write a short narrative assessing their own seminar performance in detail.*

- Product: Process form completed in detail prior to next stage in the cycle
- Mini-Task scoring guide:
  - > Answer task by filing in form completely
  - > Writes in detail about seminar participation

**Instructional Strategies/Notes:**

- May have a few representative students share their goal for speaking and listening and their performance. Likewise, teachers may ask the entire group to reflect on the entire dialogue process, i.e. the group effort. In whatever format is preferred, both individual and group reflections should be archived for reference at the beginning of the next Seminar.

**Suggested Pacing:** 15-25 minutes

**Professional Development/ Preparation:**

- Teaching Thinking through Dialogue

**SKILLS CLUSTER 4: Transition to Writing**

**I. Task analysis:** *Ability to understand the task's prompt and rubric and to transition from reading and researching phase to the writing phase.*

Students *engage effectively* in a small group discussion about the module task and rubric, what information gathered will be most useful in the writing phase, and features of good quality argumentative essays. [SL.6-12.1]

**Mini-task [WI]**

- Prompt: Discuss in small groups the task and rubric, what information you gathered that will be useful in the writing phase, and the features of a good quality argumentative essays.
- Product: highlighted notes
- Mini-task scoring: No scoring

**Instructional strategies/Notes**

- Distribute or display task and have students discuss in small groups.
- Students should highlight information in their notes that will be most useful to them in the writing phase.
- Have students share responses so that students can hear/know what each other is doing and encourage them to help each other when appropriate.
- Discuss in detail the prompt, type of writing and structure, the product, and the rubric. Share examples of good quality argumentative essays and discuss features.

**Suggested Pacing:** 30-40 minutes

## Professional Development/Preparation

- Provide guidance to students when prioritizing information gathered through reading, researching, and seminar as most relevant to the task.
- Collect good quality samples with of argumentative essays with a range of structures and patterns of development to share with students.

## SKILLS CLUSTER 5: Writing Process

**I. Planning:** *Ability to establish a thesis and develop a line of thought supportive of thesis statement and text structure appropriate to an argumentation task.*

*Students, with some guidance and support from peers and the teacher, develop and strengthen their essays as needed by planning or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. [WH.6-8.5]*

### Mini-task [WI,4]

- Prompt: Draft a thesis statement and create an outline including key elements drawn from your reading or research and order them in some logical way (e.g. chronologically, sequentially).
- Product: Thesis statement and outline/plan
- Mini-task scoring: Drafts a clear thesis statement and creates organizational outline for the task.

## Instructional Strategies/Notes

- Discuss thesis statement and share strong examples.
- Provide students with a variety of examples and ideas for approaching organization and outlining of essay.

**Suggested Pacing:** 20 minutes

## Professional Development/Preparation

- Review writing and revision strategies; plan whole-class, small group, and individual instruction in writing process based on student need. (Recommended resources: [Teaching Middle School Writers](#), Laura Robb)

**2. Development:** *Ability to construct an initial draft with an emerging line of thought and structure.*

Students will *write an argument* about what the immigration laws written between 1880 and 1930 tell us about American values during that period of time. [WH.6-8.1]

Students *produce clear and coherent writing* in their essays about immigration laws *in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience.* [WH.6-8.4]

Students will *write over an extended time frame* to produce an argumentative essay about immigration laws in response to the teaching task. [WH.6-8.10]

### Mini-task [WI,4,9]

- Prompt: Draft an opening paragraph for your essay that establishes the thesis and provides a lead in for your reader. Write an initial draft to include multiple paragraphs: an opening, development of your process, an ending to include either a comment, conclusion, or implication.
- Product: Opening paragraph and first draft
- Mini-task scoring: Provides an opening that clearly articulates thesis statement and engages the reader. Writes an initial draft addressing the prompt and written in readable prose.

### Instructional Strategies/Notes

- Share strategies for strong openings and conclusions.
- Review essay components.

**Suggested Pacing:** 40-50 minutes

### Professional Development/Preparation

- Review writing process and how to support students.

**4. Revision:** *Ability to apply revision strategies to refine development of argument, including line of thought, language usage, and tone as appropriate to audience and purpose*

Students, with some guidance and support from peers and the teacher, develop and strengthen their essays as needed by revising, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. [WH.6-8.5]

### Mini-task [W4]

- Prompt: Apply revision strategies for clarity, logic, language, cohesion (students should do at least 2 drafts).
- Product: Revised drafts (2 or more)
- Mini-task scoring: Demonstrates use of revision strategies that clarify logic and development of ideas; embeds relevant details; improves word-usage and phrasing; and creates smooth transitions between sentences and paragraphs

### Instructional Strategies/Notes

- Develop ways to manage revision process so that students get feedback in timely and helpful ways.
- Draft study (students volunteer a segment for class or small group help and discussion).
- Peer feedback on clarity of thinking and development of claim/argument.
- Read-aloud for peer and adult feedback.
- Strategies for embedding information – citation methods, quoting, paraphrasing.

**Suggested Pacing:** 90-100 minutes

### Professional Development/Preparation

- Identify strategies for effective revision, including peer feedback and timely teacher feedback.
- Provide a template for peer feedback.

## 5. Editing: *Ability to apply editing strategies and presentation applications.*

*Students, with some guidance and support from peers and the teacher, develop and strengthen their essays as needed by editing, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. [WH.6-8.5]*

### Mini-task [W4]

- Prompt: Finalize draft for the readership; apply finishing touches (e.g. visuals, neatness, formatting, copy editing).
- Product: Final draft
- Mini-task scoring: Demonstrates use of strategies that enhance the readability and appearance of the work for presentation.

### Instructional Strategies/Notes

- Provide editing guide for student use in self-correction and peer correction of language usage and grammatical errors.
- Suggest that students read essays aloud for final edit.

**Suggested Pacing:** 30-40 minutes

### Professional Development/Preparation

- Review editing strategies and provide clear editing guide to students.
- Technology and publishing methods

**Final Draft:** Submit your final draft before or on due date for scoring and feedback.

Students use technology (word processing) to produce writing and present the relationships between information and ideas about immigration and immigration laws 1880-1930 clearly and efficiently. [WH.6-8.6]

### E. Materials, references and supports: List the materials you will need and students will use. Provide citations.

For Teachers	For Students
Library of Congress- tools for primary document and photo analysis. <a href="http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/guides.html">http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/guides.html</a>	Online Resources (*Required in module):
Tovani, Chris. I Read It but I Don't Get It. Stenhouse: 2000.	*Authentic History. "How the Other Half Lives, Jacob Riis." <a href="http://www.authentichistory.com/1865-1897/progressive/riis/index.html">http://www.authentichistory.com/1865-1897/progressive/riis/index.html</a>
Beers, Kylene. When Kids Can't Read What Teachers Can Do, Heinemann: 2002.	*The Statue of Liberty- Ellis Island Foundation. "The Peopling of America, 1880-1930." <a href="http://www.ellisland.org/immexp/wseix_5_3.asp">http://www.ellisland.org/immexp/wseix_5_3.asp</a>
Allen, Janet. Inside Words. Stenhouse: 2007.	The Library of Congress Digital Collections. "Our Immigrants at Ellis Island by Mrs. Francis E. Clark." <a href="http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=gdc3&amp;fileName=scd0001_20040315002oupage.db">http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=gdc3&amp;fileName=scd0001_20040315002oupage.db</a>
Marzano, Robert. Building Academic Vocabulary. ASCD: 2005.	Immigration: Stories of Yesterday and Today (Scholastic). "Coming to America; Meet Seymour Rechtzeit" and "Interactive Tour of Ellis Island." <a href="http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/immigration/index.htm">http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/immigration/index.htm</a>
Robb, Laura. Teaching Middle School Writers. Heinemann: 2010.	The Library of Congress, American Memory. "American Notes: Travels in America, 1750-1920. With Poor Immigrants to America, Stephen Graham." <a href="http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/lhbtnbib:@field(NUMBER+@band(lhbtn+15813))">http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/lhbtnbib:@field(NUMBER+@band(lhbtn+15813))</a> :  The Library of Congress, Rise of Industrial America. "Immigration to the United States, 1851-1900." <a href="http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/presentationsandactivities/presentations/timeline/riseind/immgnts/">http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/presentationsandactivities/presentations/timeline/riseind/immgnts/</a>



The Library of Congress, Progressive Era to New Era. “Immigrants in the Progressive Era.” <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/presentationsandactivities/presentations/timeline/progress/immigrnt/>

Immigration, Their Stories. “Stories of the Past.” <http://library.thinkquest.org/20619/Present.html>

\*Gwjenvick-Gjonvik Archives, Social and Cultural History. “Summary of Immigration Laws” <http://www.gjenvick.com/Immigration/LawsAndActs/SummaryOfImmigrationLaws.html>

\*Our Documents. “Chinese Exclusion Act 1882.” Background information and copy of primary source document. <http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=old&doc=47>

\*Wapedia. “Emergency Quota Act.” [http://wapedia.mobi/en/Emergency\\_Quota\\_Act](http://wapedia.mobi/en/Emergency_Quota_Act)

Immigration Act of 1921 (Emergency Quota Act), primary source document. <http://archives.lib.cua.edu/res/docs/education/immigration/pdfs/1921-immigration-bill.pdf>

\*Wapedia. “Immigration Act of 1924.” [http://wapedia.mobi/en/Immigration\\_Act\\_of\\_1924](http://wapedia.mobi/en/Immigration_Act_of_1924)

History Matters, The U.S. Survey Course on the Web. “Who Was Shut Out? Immigration Quotas 1925-1927.” <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5078/>

Center for Educational Telecommunications. “Ancestors in the Americas.” A PBS series exploring the history and legacy of Asians in the Americas. <http://www.cetel.org/>

America.gov. “Immigration and U.S. History.” <http://www.america.gov/st/peopleplace-english/2008/February/20080307112004ebyessedo0.1716272.html>

American Immigration Through Time (Numbers and Maps). <http://unjardinextra.free.fr/documents/film-golden-door/americanimmigration-throughtime.pdf>

History.com. “Ellis Island.” <http://www.history.com/topics/ellis-island>

Immigration the Living Mosaic of People, Culture, and Hope. <http://library.thinkquest.org/20619/index.html>

\*Virginia.Edu. “The New Colossus.” <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~cap/liberty/lazaruspoem.html>

## Section 4: What Results?

**A. Student work samples:** Include examples of student work to represent each performance level on the teaching task.

**B. Other scoring supports:** To be determined as scoring work progresses.

**Note:** you will also need several assessment documents commonly used with a standard LDC-Paideia module, such as the Speaking and Listening Rubric, the Seminar Reflection Guide, and a process reflection sheet for student use in pre- and post-seminar process exercises.

## Teacher Work Section

**A. Teacher thoughts.** Provide thoughts and ideas after teaching the module to different students in different classes.

\* Note to teachers before teaching module: It is important for the teacher to help students maintain objectivity throughout the module so that students can think deeply about the texts and ideas, examining a variety of perspectives.

**B. Possible variations.** Add ideas for spin-offs or extensions to the module.

As an extension or addition to the unit, students could examine current immigrant populations. What immigrant groups are coming now, or in the last 30 years, and in what numbers? How has legislation regarding immigration been updated or revised since the Immigration Act of 1921 and 1924? A natural audience for this extension would be a legislator(s) who is involved in writing immigration laws.

Students could also interview someone who is a first or second generation immigrant to the U.S. about their experiences, asking many of the same questions asked in research portion of the module (Why did they come to the U.S.? What were their experiences after coming here? What were the challenges and unexpected surprises? Does U.S. immigration legislation impact their lives or families' lives?)

Possible interdisciplinary connections include:

- Mathematics: Population dynamics; charting and graphing the numbers of people immigrating.
- Science: Health implications; what viruses or bacteria were brought with immigrant groups from what places? How did conditions on the ships during the travel to the U.S. or living conditions in the U.S. contribute to the rate of illness?
- Language Arts: Biographies of immigrants 1880-1930; poetry and historical fiction related to immigration; creative writing about the immigrant experience.
- Visual arts and music: Examine the kinds of art and music were produced by immigrants and/or about immigrants to the U.S. during this time period.

## Photo Analysis

Use the questions below to guide your discussion about the photo. After discussing with your group, write short responses to each question.

What do you see in this image? What people and objects are shown?

What is happening in the image?

What do you think is the approximate time, place, and date of this scene? Give one piece of evidence to support your answer.

Where do you think this picture was taken?

How do you think people were feeling at this time/place?

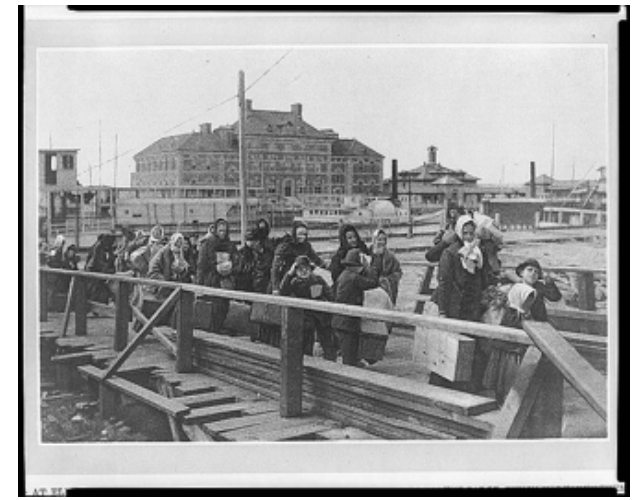
Write a caption for the photograph.

M. Hedt

Adapted from Library of Congress Analyzing Photos & Prints Tool

<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/guides.html>





## Photo Information

Source: Library of Congress; Prints and Photographs Online Collection (<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/>)

### Ellis Island 1

- Title: New York. Ellis Island
- Date Created/Published: [between 1909 and 1932]
- Summary: Immigrants walking across pier from bridge.
- Call Number: LOT 12341-5 <item> [P&P] [P&P]

### Ellis Island 2

- Title: Landing at Ellis Island
- Date Created/Published: [1902]
- Summary: Imigrants coming up the board-walk from the barge, which has taken them off the steamship company's docks, and transported them to Ellis Island. The big building in the background is the new hospital just opened. The ferry-boat seen in the middle of the picture, runs from New York to Ellis Island.
- Call Number: LOT 4837 <item> [P&P] [P&P]

### Ellis Island 3

- Title: Arriving at Ellis Island
- Date Created/Published: [1907]
- Call Number: LOT 7172 <item> [P&P] [P&P]

### Ellis Island 4

- Title: [Physical examination of female immigrants at Ellis Island, New York City]
- Date Created/Published: c1911.
- Call Number: SSF - Emigration and immigration--Ellis Island, N.Y.--1911 <item> [P&P] [P&P] [P&P] [P&P]

### Ellis Island 5

- Title: [Four immigrants and their belongings, on a dock, looking out over the water; view from behind]
- Date Created/Published: c1912 Oct. 30.
- Call Number: SSF - Emigration & Immigration--Ellis Island, N.Y.--1912 <item> [P&P] [P&P] [P&P]



Source: Library of Congress; American Memory Collection, Part of Detroit Publishing Company Photograph Collection (<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/index.html>)

### **Ellis Island 6**

- Title: New York, N.Y., immigrants' landing, Ellis Island
- Date Created/Published: between 1910 and 1920
- Call Number: LC-D4-500726 <P&P>

### **Ellis Island 7**

- Title: Inspection room, Ellis Island, New York.
- Date Created/Published: c[between 1910 and 1920]
- Call Number: LC-D4-73001 <P&P>

### **Ellis Island 8**

- Title: Ellis Island and Harbor, New York.
- Date Created/Published: c[between 1900 and 1920]
- Call Number: LC-D4-73050 <P&P>

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